THE

MARTYRS,

THE

DREAMS, AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

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Loves, friendships, hopes, and dear remembrances,
The kind embracings of the heart, and hours
Of happy thought, and smiles coming to tears,
And glories of the Heaven and starry cope
Above, and glories of the earth beneath.—Pollok.

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PREFACE.

As a volume, whatever be the nature or subject of it, is usually thought to come unceremoniously before the public, unless it appear under the introduction of a preface, I shall make mine to assume the place of envoy or chorus, and explain why the present volume has appeared at all, and the circumstances under which it was undertaken and carried through. Not that I suppose the public will be interested with such a disclosure, but that it may be acceptable to many friends, who will value the following pages for the writer's sake.

Having been appointed Honorary Secretary to the South Staffordshire Hospital, and finding that little devolved upon me but an occasional correspondence, I felt it just that my pen should be available, if it could, to the furtherance of that institution. With this impression I determined to write; but what? Revolving the matter, I considered that no volume would be so novel in the neighbourhood for which I wrote, as a volume of verse;—the thought pleased me, as it seemed

to draw me back to a pursuit once attractive to me, though long laid aside; and I considered moreover that a collection of subjects, for the main part religious, or bearing upon religion, was most in accordance with the feelings, which anything undertaken for a benevolent and Christian object should inspire. But for the time? My engagements were many and various, and my duty told me, that, in obtaining time, I must make a self-sacrifice. This I resolved to do;—encroaching on the hours of sleep, I devoted from ten o'clock at night to twelve, throughout the months of October, November, and December, and within these months and hours the following pages, with few exceptions, were written. The mention of this will claim some little leniency, if an occasional repetition of the same words should be detected.

I must here mention my sense of obligation and gratitude to a lady of the neighbourhood, by whose kindness I have been permitted to enrich my pages with TRANSLATIONS FROM THE SONNETS OF PETRARCH and others; to these the letters "A. W." are affixed. It is also necessary to say that, though I read some time back Milman's *Martyr of Antioch*, I had quite forgotten the

scheme of that beautiful dramatic poem when writing the MARTYRS. Having since read it, I found a description of the Groves of Daphne, which, had I remembered to have been represented by so able a master, I should have forborne to have entered upon. The same may be said of the CHORUS TO APOLLO. For the incidents connected with the MARTYRS IGNATIUS AND POLYCARP I am indebted chiefly to the Rev. R. W. Evans's *Biography of the Early Church.*

I may be thought by some to be too capricious in using a multiplicity of metres; but this I have done designedly, both to add variety to the volume, and also to adapt, as far as I could, the metre to the subject,—that they might harmonize,—a matter in such compositions too generally overlooked. In the TRANSLATIONS I have preserved the metre of the originals.

Whatever may be the success of this volume, and whether or no any profits arising from it may be given to the institution, for whose benefit it has been written, I gratefully acknowledge that I have already been amply repaid in the composition, and in correcting it for the press, in the employment and comfort it has afforded my mind during a period of very severe trial and

calamity. It has engaged my thought, when I was unable to fix it upon other studies,—and it has lifted up my hopes and desires oftentimes above the over-hanging clouds of darkness and sorrow. Its subjects, without my having the most distant fore-notion of the bereavement which I was about to be called upon to bear, are in strict accordance with what have been my subsequent thoughts and feelings; and have, in no small degree, served to tranquillize my mind, and restrain my outward exhibition of grief. I may suppose them, therefore, calculated to speak in tones, which, to the feeling heart at least, can elevate to resignation in seasons of desolation and anguish; and I cannot refrain from expressing my belief, that, if these pages be privileged to afford the same consolation to even a few, which they have to me, I shall not have written in vain.

As a book has usually a dedication, I dedicate mine

To the Cause of Christian Benevolence.

Deanery, Wolverhampton,
May 8, 1847.

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THE

MARTYRS.

Bestiis, gladio, ignibus puris, nec saltem contentus es dolorum nostrorum compendio, ac simplici et veloci brevitate pœnarum, admoves laniandis corporibus longa tormenta, multiplicas lacerandis visceribus numerosa supplicia, nec feritas atque immanitas tua usitatis potest contenta esse tormentis.—*Cyprian ad Demetrium.*

How grew the Church of God? It grew
Not as a summer flower,
But Martyr's blood, like morning dew,
Was its reviving shower.—*Winslow.*

To the Hallowed Harp.

HARP OF THE PROPHET-MINSTRELS, WHOSE SWEET STRINGS
TRILLED TO THE HEBREW POESY, AND RUNG
EREWHILE WITHIN THOSE COURTS WHERE HARPERS SUNG
HIS PRAISE, WHO DWELT BETWEEN THE CHERUBS' WINGS;—
SHELL, SWEET, THOUGH SAD, WHOSE FITFUL UTTERINGS
SPAKE IN WILD GRIEF, WHEN JUDAH'S HARP WAS HUNG
BY BABEL'S STREAM,—HER RENT STRINGS IDLY FLUNG
AROUND THE WILLOWS,—MUTE IN SORROWINGS:
INSPIRING HARP! OH! COULD I CATCH A SOUND
THE FEEBLEST,—THE MERE ECHO,—OF THY STRAIN,
MY WORDS SHOULD FLOW IN NOTES SO ELOQUENT,
THE WOE-WORN WORLD SHOULD LISTEN,—ALL INTENT
TO CATCH THE STRANGE, SOFT MUSIC FLOATING ROUND,
CHARMING AWAY ITS TOIL AND TEARFUL PAIN.

ERRATA.

Page 36, last line, for *wildy* read *wildly*.
Page 316, line 8, for *sweet* read *gay*.
Page 338, line 20, for *It* read *Its*.

THE MARTYRS.

ANIMA quæ amat, ascendit frequenter, et currit familiariter per plateas cælestes Jerusalem, visitando Patriarchas, et Prophetas, salutando Apostolos, admirando exercitus Martyrum et Confessorum.—*Aug.*

PART FIRST.

I.

A HUNDRED years had passed away
Since upon Judah's midnight plain
Appeared the light, outshining day,
In flood of glory streaming;
And o'er the tranquil earth was seen
A heavenly host, in radiant sheen,
With robes of brightness beaming,
Pouring the soft and joyous strain—
"Glory to God in highest Heaven,
And peace on earth to man forgiven."

A hundred years had passed away
Since in the stall of Bethlehem's inn,
Just born into a world of sin,
The Infant Saviour lay.
Full seventy years had swiftly fled
Since the same form, with fainting tread,
Laden with hate, and wounds, and scorn,
And cross on bleeding shoulder borne,
Toiled up the weary steep;
Where, stript, and pierced, and crucified,
Bearing our many sins, He died,
In anguish, dread and deep.

II.

Full thirty rapid years had flown
Since the doomed city, leaguered round,
In famine pined; when many a mound
In closest siege was thrown
Against her walls,—against her towers,—
By Rome's exasperated powers;
While Feud and Slaughter stalked within,
More dreadful than the assailants' din;
And thin Disease of sallow hue
Wander'd the frighted city through;
And Pestilence, with sick'ning breath,
And every hideous form of Death.

Then deeds were done of hate and ill
Which cause the very blood to chill;
Mothers, constrained by Famine's power,
Their murdered infants to devour;
Houses, polluted with the dead,
From whom their dearest kindred fled.
How many a wasted form was seen,
As it a spectral shape had been
Haunting the pestilential air,
With hollow cheek and vacant stare,
And long dishevelled locks all streaming;
Some wild, prophetic omen screaming.
While others, feebly stealing by,
Crept to some far-off tomb to die.
Yet not a sound of wail could break,
Nor tear the burning eye-ball slake;
Silent they sate in mute despair,
Unpitied and unpitying there,
With haggard looks, and glaring eye
Lit with the smile of Mockery.

III.

What tongue can tell the mounded dead,
Or blood, like lavish water shed,
Or crosses reared the city round,
With writhing wretches, nailed and bound,

As outmost, middle, inner walls,
Were passed at toilsome intervals,
And up the Temple's dazzling height
Was borne the ruddy-glaring light,—
Was heard the shriek of wild amaze,—
Was seen the devastating blaze,—
Throughout the darkness of the night,—
Till to the towering roof it clung,
And o'er the awe-struck city flung
  Its red and bursting streams,
While, porch, and pinnacle, and spire,
The prey of the exulting fire,
  With sculptured doors, and cedar beams,
And many a carved and polished stone,
Mid dark and smouldering ashes thrown,
Sunk down, more dark and smouldering still,
On Zion's whilome-hallowed hill.

IV.

The Holy city,—once so fair,
Jehovah's dwelling-place and care,
With hill and bulwark fenced around,
And filled with Music's swelling sound,—
Is desolate! And Zion's steep
Is one dark waste,—one scattered heap.

No more the wondering Gentile waits
Without its Temple's costly gates;
No more the thronging tribes appear
To tread its courts in reverent fear;
No incense now,—no praises rise,—
No victim on the altar dies;
No silver trumpets' mellow tune
Proclaims High Feast, or Sacred Moon;
No minstrels now, to golden string,
The sacred Psalms of Judah sing;
The camels' bells no more are ringing,
Sabæa's fragrant spices bringing.
The throng has ceased. The Temple lone
Lies in dark embers, stone from stone.
Her holy veil in twain is rent,
And levelled each proud battlement;
Ceased has Judea's regal state,
Her hills, her hearths, are desolate.
Her children, wasted, crushed, and torn,
The Roman's hate,—the Gentile's scorn,—
Far o'er the earth's wide countries roam,
Without a land,—without a home.

v.

And why does Judah sit forlorn?
Why was Destruction madly borne,

Like a wild flood, to overspread
Her streets,—her homes,—her courts with dead?
Her sin was great,—with grievous cries
It call'd for vengeance from the skies;
Her hands with prophets' blood were stained,
Her rites, her altars, were profaned;
Her courts a bigot priesthood trod,
And Judah had forgot her God.
Oh! she had steeped her cup with crime,
The darkest in the rolls of Time,
When she, with frantic blindness fill'd,
Her long-told Lord, her Saviour, killed,
Who came with breast full, full of love,
Who wept her beauteous heights above.
But Judah turned her heart away,
Too blind to see the glorious ray,
Which round His steps was poured;
Too proud, too hardened, to obey,
Or know her visitation-day,
The presence of her Lord.

VI.

Ah! more than blind her heart, I ween,
For what unheard-of acts had been,
Throughout that God-loved region, seen,

In Salem now forlorn?
How many a deed and miracle,
Since He, the Hope of Israel,
In Bethlehem's inn was born.
The wondering crowds had witnessed there
The dead to life restored,—
Had heard the long-bound tongue declare
The praises of its Lord;
With marvel they had *seen* and *heard*
The blind to *see*, the deaf to *hear*,
And healed demoniacs listening near
To the Almighty Word.
They too had seen that self-same from—
Betrayed—arraigned—denied—
Bending beneath the angry storm,
Bearing the Father's crushing wrath,
Staining, with blood, the toilsome path,
Bowed with our weight of debt and sin,—
The load without—the curse within—
The crowned—the crucified.

VII.

From Salem, too, the sound began
Of guilt and sin forgiven;
Of peace and pardon preached to man,
Now reconciled to Heav'n.

From Salem went the chosen band—
The Heralds of the Cross—
Through ev'ry sea—o'er ev'ry land—
Prepared to suffer pain or loss,
To front the tyrant's threat'ning face,
To pass through danger and disgrace,
To meet with hate, rebuke, or woe,
The scorner's scorn,—the smiter's blow,—
And home, and kin, and life, forego,
For Him, the Saviour, they adored,
Their Hope—their Comforter—their Lord.
Oh! boldly oft in faith they stood
Before the maddened multitude;
Oft, mid the prison, and their chains,
The dungeon heard their midnight strains;
Oft, before kings and judges led,
They knew no fear—they felt no dread;
Oft, amid danger and distress,
Cold, hunger, pain, and weariness,
Bearing about their tortur'd frame
The marks of that most hallow'd name,
They joy'd *His* sufferings to partake,
Rejoiced to suffer for His sake,
Not fearing Death,—not heeding Life,—
Willing to quit the mortal strife—
Willing to lay the burden down,
And enter on the promised crown.

VIII.

Those faithful servants, one by one,
Had with their toil and turmoil done;
The cross, the torture, or the sword,
Had called them home unto the Lord.
The watch was kept,—the race was run,—
The conflict fought,—the conquest won;—
No more with grief and pain oppressed,
No more the weary earth they trod;
They slept the slumber of the blest,
And entered on the promised rest,
The rest prepared by God.
One only lingered yet behind*
Of all who saw the Saviour's face,
Who knew his gentleness of mind,—
His love and mercy unconfined,—
Or shared on earth his biding-place.
He waited yet—the loved, the last—
Through many a fiery trial cast;
With burning zeal, yet patient will,
To turn aside the threatened ill;
The foe to watch,—the Church to shield,—
From rising heresies and fears,
When all beside had left the field,—
A Saint of a full hundred years.

* St. John.

XI.

In fair Ionia's lovely clime,
In olden time, a city stood,
Long swept away by floods of Time,
And now a desert solitude.
There, ages past, were proudly seen
The well-thronged mart and crowded street;
Was heard the stir of active feet,
And all the tumult of a scene
Where crowds from many countries meet.
There once in dazzling pomp appeared
Diana's Temple, costly bright,
In style of wondrous grandeur reared,
With architraves and friezes light,
And sumptuous shrines, and silver throne,
And columns hewn of Parian stone,
The princely gifts of Eastern kings,
Enriched with Grecian sculpturings.
Above these columns, soaring high,
The roof of cedar caught the eye,
With all its flowered tracery;
On high, below, around, between,
At every glance was radiance seen;
While sparkling gems of colours rare
Threw out their rainbow glories there,
To captivate the sight and sense,
With lavish of magnificence.

Ah! then that city, in its pride,
By wandering Fame was blazoned wide;
The stranger, mute with ravished eyes,
  Gazed, as entranced, on place so fair,
And, as he viewed its structures rise
In marble whiteness to the skies,
  Wondered what art could place them there.
Who would have deemed so fair a place
Time's silent finger could erase?
But wander now that desert plain,
And Ephesus you seek in vain!

X.

Yet in this city, wholly given,
  To worship at the idol's shrine,
Appeared the glorious light from Heaven,
  Guiding the soul to things divine.
Here, from that light and Pagan crowd,
A little band in reverence bowed
To Him who framed the earth and skies,
Turning from Heathen mysteries.
Here Paul, the glowing Saint, was heard,—
Here was the angry tumult stirred,—
When he, with heavenly zeal inflamed,
Its worship, idol-worship named,

And through its streets undaunted trod,
Bidding its superstitious bands
To turn from idols made with hands,
To serve the living God.
Here, too, a Christian Church was reared,
And many an eager heart appeared
To cast its silver gods aside,
And worship Him, the Crucified.
And pure at first the flame of love
Fell on that Church from Heaven above;
Brightly it shone, and brightly burned,
And thousands to the Saviour turned;
And Ephesus became renowned
For other than Diana's praise;
And where erewhile the Heathen lays
Arose in festive sound,
Now many a listening convert heard
The Heaven-inspired and Holy Word,
By deepest zeal imprest,
With power, and miracle, and sign,
From the Evangelist divine,
Who lay in Jesus' breast.

XI.

Long years had passed since near the sea
Of wild and stormy Galilee,

That gentle voice had reached his heart,
Bidding him from his nets depart
To follow Him, with chosen few,
That Holy Land of Promise through.
Since then what wonders had he viewed!
  His drooping and his dying Lord
Laid in the cavern-solitude,
  And then to life restored.
With watching, and with wondering eyes,
He, too, had seen that Lord arise
Far from his upward-gazing sight,
Lost amid Heaven's transcending light;—
He felt the Pentecostal fire
With words his burning lips inspire;—
And he, perchance, had gazed with them,
Who looked on sacked Jerusalem,
Viewing the threatened curse fulfilled
On those who Israel's Saviour killed.

XII.

What marvel then, his faith and love
No dread of man—no threat—could move:
What marvel, when the maddened crowd,
With cries for blood, were raging loud,
That John, with holy, dauntless breast,
His name—his Faith—his Lord—confessed.

What recked the crowd that he had seen
Each hallowed spot where Christ had been?
What heeded they that he had heard
From God's own lips the burning word?
What could his unmoved look inspire,
But stubborn scorn and wrathful fire?
What was his bold, yet humble, mien,
But witness of the Nazarene?
Oft was he bound in guard, and bands,
Oft rescued from the tyrant's hands;
Oft tried by tortures and distress,
Yet steeled against their bitterness,
As if Death's threatening, closing hour
Were warded by some unseen power.
Oh! well, I wist, what guard,—what guide,—
Moved, though unnoticed, by his side,—
Thy hand, O Lord of Help, was there,
To save him through each spreading snare;
Thy word restrained or turned aside
The sword—the flame—the swelling tide;—
No spot so desert was but where
He sought—he gained—thy shielding care;
E'en Patmos' barren isle he found
No dreary exile dark and dim,—
A land of light and hallowed ground,
Its waste of wildness was to him;

For there Thy smile before him went,
Like the bright cloud o'er Israel's tent,
Beaming upon his banishment;
Before his rapt and gifted eyes,
Outspreading Heaven's own mysteries.

XIII.

But Time and changes can assuage
The tumult's din—the tyrant's rage;
Darkness and storms soon clear away,
And beams again the sunny day;
The angry tide forgets to roar,
And peaceful ripples to the shore,
And o'er the wild and black'ning sea
Is soft and bright tranquillity.
The Saint, returned from Patmos' isle,
Beheld anew the placid smile
Beam o'er the Church; calm sunshine now
Is pure and hopeful on her brow.
But Peace, alas! may grow secure,
And fervent Love not long endure;
The prayerful heart may cease from prayer,
The watchful eye its watch forbear;
Deadness may steal where all was life,
And Zeal degenerate into Strife.

So fared it then;—the Church was still
From tyrant wrong and outward ill;
But in her hidden breast she bore
Full many a wound and rancorous sore.
Error was spreading unawares—
The sophist laid his tangling snares—
The fruitful field was sown with tares.
Ah! well the Saint might weep to see
The spreading of Apostasy;
Well he might weep that Satan's power
The Church could snare in peaceful hour!
Oh! rather had he not been free,
But died, where none his death could see,
In Exile's loneliest secrecy,
  Than thus to hear the Truth denied,
To weep for numbers drawn away,
To witness Hope, Love, Zeal, decay,
  And Faith o'erthrown by Wisdom's pride.

XIV.

Yet still at Ephesus was heard
For many a year his faithful word;
There, softly silvered o'er with age,
  And bowed with toil and worn with years,
He hung above the Inspired Page,
  And moistened it with holy tears,

As if those burning drops had sealed
The sacred truths which it revealed.
How mild his brow—how calmly free
From Passion's strife, or earthly care ;
Deep, earnest, holy love was there
Lighting that face so radiantly.
And now he felt the hour draw nigh,
When Life's faint lamp was dimly burning,
With watching and prophetic eye
He looked into the opening sky,
And knew that soon, with toils opprest,
His soul should find its promised rest,
Back to its home—its God—returning.
But why was his foreboding sight
Oft turned to Heav'n in silent prayer?
Why did large tear-drops dim the light—
The light and love that sparkled there?
What deep emotions swelled his breast—
What anxious thoughts his bosom wrung—
Ruffling his spirit's peaceful rest,
As o'er that Holy Page he hung?
Those tears—those deep emotions—told
The tide of love that inward rolled;
That earnest prayer was raised on high
In pure, unearthly fervency,
That now, when Truth was dimly shining,
And faith in many a breast declining,

Some champion hearts the Lord would raise,
On Heav'n's high embassy to tread
Between the living and the dead,
And, like unyielding bulwarks, stand
Unswayed by fear—unwarped by praise—
Stemming the shock of evil days,
And Persecution's kindled brand.
Men who, with deepest truth impressed,
With ardent faith and dauntless breast,
Might speak with Apostolic tone,
When he at length—the last—was gone;
And in the Church's dark distress,
When many a storm was round her flying,
And foes her sacred creed denying,
Might stand as Heav'n-taught witnesses.

XV.

And there were two who, listening, hung
To all the glowing truths he told;
Courageous—animate—and young,—
In pureness tried—in firmness bold.
How many an hour the aged Saint
Would talk with them of holy themes,
And to their rapt attention paint
Scenes far beyond their loftiest dreams.

Oh! he would tell what words divine
From Jesus' lips of sweetness fell,
As through the towns of Palestine
On Mercy's mild behests he trod,
Proving, by sign and miracle,
That all his works were wrought of God.
He would unfold what glories bright
Around his brow of meekness beamed,
When robed in garb of dazzling light,—
Transfigured to their wondering sight,—
Celestial splendour round him gleamed,
His perfect God-head to proclaim,
And tell their hearts from whence he came.
Or He would tell the deep, deep love,—
Nor taunting scorn nor hate could move,—
That love which bound Him to the tree,—
More strong than life—than pain—than death,
Which failed not with His failing breath,
Nor in His dying agony;—
That quenchless love, which bound him there
Faster than nail, or iron rude,
Which rent His feet and bleeding hands,—
Faster than cords or straining bands,
Which galled Him, as He suffering stood,
With bleeding back and shoulder bare;
Stript—scourged—mocked—robed—insulted
—crowned,—
Breathing not one reviling sound.

On high and holy themes like these
The aged Saint would love to dwell,
Enrapt with glowing heart to tell
The Saviour's dying agonies,
Till their young minds the ardour caught,
And they would long, in kindling thought,
Joy,—peace,—life,—all things,—to forego,—
For one who died, and loved them so.
And well the Saint each bosom knew
What thoughts—what zeal—within it burned;
What holy love—what purpose true;
And oft to Heav'n his eye he turned
In mute desire imploringly,
That God's own hand their guard might be
Through doubts—through fear—through snares
—through pride—
Or Persecution's swelling tide;
And, if such trying hour should come,
Strengthen their hearts for Martyrdom.

XVI.

Forsooth it was a lovely sight
To view the meek and reverend sage,
With flowing locks of silvery white,
Upon a brow with glories bright,—
And eye unquenched, undimmed with age,—

Infirm in years, but young in heart,—
Bearing the patient teacher's part;
And at his feet, in humble guise,
With listening ear and watchful eyes,
The two, as anxious learners stand,
All self-subdued to each command;
While look and posture told full well
They marked each word which from him fell.
The one,* with ardour uncontrolled,
Appeared with heavenly flame inspired,
With rapt enthusiasm fired,
In eagle vigor soaring bold;
Zeal in his every look was seen,—
The hero in his dauntless mien;
Nought wrecked he of the threat'ning hour,—
The Gnostic's scorn—oppression's power,—
Eager in word—deed—heart—to try
The firmness of his constancy.
Nought he concealed—no thought suppressed—
From fear of death, or tyrants' frown.
He longed to mingle with the blest,
And panted for the Martyr's Crown.
The other† of a mood more mild,

* Ignatius. † Polycarp.

With all his teacher's glowing love,
Was meek and simple as a child,
And gentle as the gentlest dove.
Not that he shrunk from pain or toil,
In weak resolve or craven fear,—
Oh! never would his heart recoil,
Though death's—though danger's—hour was near.
By Faith he walked from day to day,—
His step on earth—his heart in Heaven,—
Ardent to join the bright array
Of Saints around the glorious throne;
Yet strong in hope to linger on
O'er Life's beclouded billows driven,
Till God his spirit should release,
And bid him enter into peace.
Both, both with Saint-like passions glowed
To tread the path the Martyr's trod,
And steadfast in its thorny road,—
To live—to toil—to die—for God.

XVII.

Years speed amain;—and strengthened now
In heart with grace,—in form with years,—
In posture meek,—with saintly brow,
And breasts which beat with pious fears,

Beneath those holy hands they knelt,—
In priestly blessing on them laid,—
And, flame-like, ev'ry accent felt
Of that impressive charge which bade,
That, given to God, their lives should move
In one unchanging work of love,—
Devoted in full heart and will
The Deacon's office to fulfil.
But days went on! The holy sage
Must finish now his pilgrimage;
His failing limbs—his sinking frame—
Weaker and weaker still became;
He felt that soon the weary weight
Of years—of toils—he should lay down—
Pass in blest flight the peaceful gate—
And gain the Eternal Crown.
At length the long-wished hour had come,
Which called his waiting spirit home,
He sunk in slumber, calm and deep,
As one who sinks to welcome sleep,—
Without a pang—without a sigh—
Entering on Immortality!
Happy—Oh! happy—thus to die!

XIX.

Each year its unthought changes brings
To mutable and mortal things;

The brow, to-day enwrapt with care,
To-morrow greets us calm and fair;
The eye, which bright to-day appears,
Soon changes into grief and tears,
Just as the shifting sky is seen
All radiant now, and all serene,—
But soon—with black'ning clouds o'erspread—
Its calm has ceased—its radiance fled.
Thus—or in peace or danger cast—
The struggling Church through changes past;
Now torn—opposed—oppressed—betrayed;
Now calm—unhurt—and undismayed—
Proving anon the fickle mood
Of angry sect,—or multitude
To hate and fury quickly stirred,
By ill-laid charge or treacherous word;
Or finding else protection's hand,
As some mild Cæsar held command.
The Church had peace! The rage—the roar—
Of angry foes was heard no more;
But, in their stead, the heart could raise,
Unchecked, to Heav'n its hymn of praise.
The flames of hate no longer burned—
The rage for blood had backward turned—
Error and Heresy awhile
Had ceased her holy bond to rend;
Calm sunshine seemed at length to smile,
And all that scared her peace to end.

Strongly she grew, and, spreading wide,
In peace and truth was multiplied.
Strongly she grew, like some fair tree,
Which Heav'n waters silently,
Firm-fixed and rooted in the ground,
Stretching its stately arms around,
In bright, unwithering leaves arrayed,
From storms and heat a sheltering shade.

XX.

Said I she grew? What shore was found
Which had not heard her welcome sound?
In towns—in cities—far removed,
Her pure and holy light was spread;
And wrongs and cruelty but proved
How firm the hearts of those who bled;
Her Martyr's blood, in very deed,
Became the rich, the fruitful seed
Of ripe and golden harvests stored,—
Gathered and added to the Lord.
Full many a Church there was which lay
Basking in Truth's eternal ray,
The Word of Life,—the Spirit's blessing,—
In full and holiest peace possessing.

And many a Church which kept the Faith
Through shame and loss—through pains and
death;
With watchful Bishops near, whose word
Might check—might counsel—those who erred;
The bad reprove—the good commend,—
To each a father and a friend.
And John's disciples thus were trained—
Instructed—set apart—ordained;
The one* o'er Antioch's Church, in prayer,
Ruled with an Elder's watchful care;
The guide—the pastor—of his flock—
The young he warned—the old he blest,
Those arming for the tempest's shock—
These pointing to the promised rest.
The other,† filled with patient zeal,
To Smyrna's troubled Church was sent,
Its head to raise—its wounds to heal—
By long and bitter conflicts rent.
With truth—with grace—with gentlest love—
With angel voice, and lips of flame,
He raised their hearts to Heav'n above,
And kept them in his Saviour's name.

* Ignatius. † Polycarp

XXI.

But tempests now are gathering fast;
The days of peace are overcast
By many a rising, swelling cloud,
And murmurs thick'ning hoarse and loud.
The Church must arm her for the shock;
Stand, like a champion, patient—bold,
Cling closer—firmer—to the rock,
And stronger make her anchor-hold;
Must count her truths—her blessings dear,
For days of strife and blood are near.

THE MARTYRS.

Aurea in Ignati fulgent cognomine corde,
Hic tua tu tecum nomina, Christe, locas.
Sparserat effuso cor sanguine.—*Sarb. Cas. Epig.*

PART SECOND.

I.

Roll back, O Time! the heavy cloud
Hung over many a by-gone scene;—
Bid Desolation lift the shroud
From buried heaps where life has been!
Silence and Waste and wrinkled Eld,
Who voiceless sit mid ruins old,
Be your dark mists awhile dispelled,—
Awhile your mysteries unfold;

O Wizard Past! before me spread
The scenes—the forms—of ages fled!
Enough! enough! before my eyes
Anew in glorious beauty rise;
Nations and kingdoms which thy sway
Has swept in crumbling years away.
I see in the far Syrian land,
A city spreading fair and bright,
With breath of Beilan's mountains fanned,
And bathed in Heaven's serenest light;
Queen of the East, her merchants there
Brought the rich freight of many a sea,
Egypt's fine linen—purple rare—
And robes of Tyrian broidery.
Chariots and horsemen thronged her gates,—
Her feasts with harp and timbrel rung,—
And all which Pleasure consecrates
To mirth and glee were round her flung.
Belted with walls from height to height,
Proudly she lay in dazzling sheen,
Catching afar the traveller's sight
Her bold and beetling rocks between.
Meandering through her lovely vale,
Sparkling Orontes flowed along
Through gardens, which the nightingale
Made tuneful with untiring song.

II.

Thus beauteously did Antioch lie
Beneath the cloudless eastern sky,
And near it Daphne's cypress groves,—
With myrtle bowers and dim alcoves,—
And sombre cedar walks which spread
Their roof-like branches overhead.
While dales, with whisp'ring echoes round,
And every charm of sight and sound
Stole on the sense, and lured away
The wanderer's heart a willing prey.
Encharmed it seemed;—*here* all was still,
Save the faint murmur of the rill
Now o'er its smooth-kissed pebbles purling—
Now round some wave-washed willow curling.
There sounds harmonious caught the ear,
And sunny vistas opened clear,
Lovely as in the dreams of night
Are spread before us lands of light;
Here flow'rs of ev'ry scent and hue
In wild and lavish plenty threw
Their perfume round,—or charmed the eye
With colours of the richest dye;
There grottoes cool,—and laurel shades,—
And fountains clear,—and far cascades
Falling so softly, seemed to tell
Of Naiads of each crystal well,—

Of Echo in the cool glen sporting,—
And unseen nymphs the zephyrs courting,—
And spirits of the glade and wood
Haunting this lovely solitude.
No Circé groves could match, I ween,
The charm—the stillness—of the scene;
Alas! the foot that wandered there
Soon owned the smooth, seductive snare,
For sight, and sense, and soul would seem
Lapped in the calm voluptuous dream;
Stern veterans, whom no battle-field
Had seen in dread, or hope to yield,
Here gently lured and languid grown,
Would Honour, Hope, and Fame disown;
The bashful maid, in this soft spot,
Her virgin sense and shame forgot;
And e'en the stoic laid aside
His sneer and his ascetic pride;
While Sorrow's self forsook its pining
Amid these dreamy shades reclining.
Oh! few along such scenes could stray,
And bring, unsnared, their hearts away!
Yet high the faith—and strong the power—
Which guarded through Temptation's hour,
Amid this maze of soft delights,
Polluted with its sensual rites,

A little band—a sacred few—
Who first the name of Christian knew.*
Oh! pure the light of zeal which here
Shone through the darkness full and clear;
Lovely the holiness which burned
In many a heart from idols turned;
Wondrous the work of Him, whose might
Made hatred love—and darkness light;
And neath his yoke of mercy bowed
The heart of sin, debased and proud,—
Bidding each strong impetuous will
Be humbled—chastened—hallowed—still!
Yet sooth 'twas thus;—in faith and peace,
Here grew the Church with blest increase,—
And here—with fond and watchful care—
With tears, with joy, with hope, with prayer—
Did John's disciple guard his flock,
In Heathen-Christian Antioch,
Through anxious scenes and rising fears—
Through days of storm—and changeful years—
Longing, with earnest, holiest love,
To bear them pure to Christ above.

* The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.—*Acts*, xi.—26.

III.

It was the time when Rome had spread
Her conquering arms to distant lands ;
And, with her many-legioned bands,
Had every farthest nation led
Subject and bowed to her commands.
It was the time when Trajan fired,
By conquests on the Danube's banks,
For wider triumphs yet aspired,
And, in his lust for rule, desired
To re-subdue the Parthian ranks.
At Antioch were his bands enrolled,—
Here was his tent—his eagle reared ;—
For strong its rampired heights appeared,
With walls, and many a trusty hold,
To mock assault or leaguer bold.
In Daphne's groves the altar smoked,—
At Daphne's shrines the victims die,—
While wreathed and white-robed priests invoked
The favouring gods for victory.
Nor wanted lyre, and chorus there,
To lead the sacred dance along,
While laurelled youths and maidens fair
Responsive harped the votive song,
Bidding the listening echo raise
Apollo's name, and Dian's lays.

HYMN.

YOUTHS.—Hear us, Apollo, hear,
We dance around thy shrine,
Propitiously draw near,
Healer divine.

MAIDENS.—Hear us, O Goddess bright,
Down from thy fair orb lean,
Aid us with shafts of light,
O Silver Queen.

YOUTHS.—God of the locks of gold,
Quivered with light appear.
Thy votaries behold,
Hear us, O hear.

MAIDENS.—O Virgin Goddess fair,
Speeding through Heav'n serene,
Look through the hallowed air,
Hear us, O Queen.

IV.

The priests libations ceased to pour,—
The rites and sacrifice were o'er;

The feast was done, and dance and song
Hurried the merry night along;
The youthful step—the youthful eye—
Were sprightly in the revelry,
For many a virgin, smiling fair,
And many a bright-eyed youth was there,
And Music's melting voice was heard,
And every breast with joy was stirred;
And Love's fond vows were softly flowing,
And traitorous maiden blushes glowing.
Each heart was warm—each cheek was bright—
And yielding to the full delight.
But Hark!—Is it the thunder's sound,
Which shakes the festive grove around?
Is it the heavy, measured tread
Of foes to gathering battle led?
What stills each heart?—suspends each breath?
What makes each pallid cheek look death?
What shakes the tall trees to and fro
With reeling and convulsive throe?
It is—it is—the earthquake's shock
Which rends apart the shivering rock,—
And fills with horror and affright,
Throughout the revels of the night,
The festive Antioch.

V.

The earthquake passed ;—the ground no more
Heaved with the throb and wild uproar ;
The city raised her drooping head—
Mourned—and forgot—her swallowed dead.
Yet while the rent and wreck-strewn ground
In desolation yawned around ;
Malice looked forth with evil eye—
And Odium raised her jealous cry :—
" This fearful shock,—this fright and dread,—
The curséd Nazarenes have spread ;
They hate our gods ;—and they despise
Our worship and our sacrifice.
Incensed for them, the angry Heav'n
This sign of treasured wrath hath giv'n ;
For them the trembling earth was stirred—
For them the rumbling thunder heard.
Let search be made ;—no respite give,—
Unworthy are such slaves to live ;
Away with this vile race ! away !
Give to the hungry beasts their prey ;—
Lead them to torture and to shame—
And blot out this detested name !"

VI.

Thus Malice prompted ;—and soon spread,
From mouth to mouth it wildy fled,

Like to the ocean erewhile seen
Hushed in dead stillness, and serene;
Soon as the winds across it sweep,
In rising murmurs, hoarse and deep,
Its noiseless slumber is dispelled,
Ruffled and black its face beheld,—
Wild with its dashing, deep-voiced waves,
Against its girdling rocks it raves,
As each rude breaker, lashed and torn,
Mounts where the swelling tide is borne;—
So was it with that angry crowd,
Now in hoarse clamors bursting loud;
A while it sate in mute despair.
At the wide ruin yawning there,—
Till Falsehood raised its ready ire,—
And Hatred fanned the kindling fire;—
Then madly, as wild waves, it spread
Throughout that city of the dead,
Where erst was stillness deep and dread.
Each home was searched,—each peaceful scene,
Where the offenceless Saints had been.
The rabble's shout,—the frantic yelling,—
Rose on each gale—broke on each dwelling—
Like tigers springing on their prey,
They drag the innocent away;

The brand—the cross—unmoved they bore ;
Their mangled limbs the lions tore ;
In parching flames their blood was spent ;
Their quivering flesh the pincers rent ;
While flocking thousands, hurrying forth,
Gazed on the scene with fiendish mirth,
With close-held breath and vengeful eye,
Rejoiced to see the victims die.

VII.

But where was he, their Bishop, then,
Amid this strife of fiends and men?
Shrunk the old man—infirm ?—afraid ?—
Not so, in sooth ;—but undismayed,
He, mid this rage, in peaceful mood,
With looks, which faith in Heav'n pourtrayed,
Before the haughty Trajan stood.
How wide the contrast you might trace
In mien, in habit, and in face !
The victor sat with angry eye,
And brow which gathered sullenly ;
Stern was his glance ;—and ireful scorn
Upon his curling lip was borne ;
The Saint was firm,—unblenched with fear
Of shame, or death, or torture near ;

With beam of holy hope inspired,
And kindling eye, with ardour fired;
The *one*, with proud defiance, viewed,
  Dependent nations own his rod;—
The *other* had *himself* subdued,
  And bowed his vanquished heart to God.

VIII.

The Saint beheld the victor's pride,
And passions which he could not hide;
He knew, perchance, the thoughts which passed
Throughout his bosom fierce and fast;
He knew that he but ill could brook
The glance of a reproving look,
Much less the cutting words of one,
Untaught to use the flatterer's tone:—
Yet, natheless, with undaunted breast,
He thus the haughty prince addressed:—
"I know, great Chief, my words to thee
Will sound but idle mockery;
I know thou wilt despise my name
As one of infamy and shame:—
Yet will I speak,—though I should gain
Nought but thy anger—or disdain.

In vain thy idol temples rise,—
In vain with vows thou mock'st the skies,—
No gods can hear thy suppliant cry,
But He—the Holy One on high;
O humbly be his name adored,—
The only Shield—the only Lord."
In wrath, the scowling chief replied:—
"Cease, dotard! preach to Nazarenes
Of him—the scourged and crucified;
To thee we owe these wasting scenes
Of earthquake and the troubled land,
To thee and thy accursed band.
No more! Away! Let chains be cast
Around this prating dreamer fast;
To Rome, a captive, let him go,
Fit wonder for the public show:
Let beasts his mangled body tear,—
Sport for the people let him be,—
And mid the crowding circus there,
Die like a dog of Galilee.
See to it guards;—a bark prepare
And quickly hence this frantic bear."
A pray'r of mild forgiveness passed
Throughout the Elder's tranquil breast,—
One look of pitying love he cast,—
And firm, yet meek, his God addressed:—

"I thank, Thee, Lord, that Thou has deigned
Thy servant's changeless love to try;—
Still nerve me—dragged,—condemned,—and
chained,—
A Martyr for thy truth to die;
O Lord! may still thy sleepless eye
Watch thy afflicted Church above;
Grant it, whatever hour is nigh,
To cling to thee in faith and love;
Let not, my God! the hallowed fire,
Once lit, in Antioch expire."

IX.

The vessel left the fading shore,
Lightly it bounded on;
Precious the holy freight it bore—
A true and Saintly one.
Oh! who shall tell what angel guard
Above its deck kept watch and ward?
Who shall declare what guiding hand
Marked its calm way from land to land?
Who shall relate what favouring gales
Speeded its course, and filled its sails,
Till, safe from winds and waves restored,
In Smyrna's haven it was moored?

Here for a space Ignatius stayed,
Not by rough winds or seas delayed,
But waiting convoy (it was said)
Till the next vessel, bound for home,
Should bear him and his guards to Rome
But why this long delay?
Why is no transport vessel there,
The captive straight to Rome to bear?
Why must he for a season bide
For home-bound bark and fitting tide
Day after ling'ring day?
The hand of God the vessel steered,
Till to the welcome shore it neared,
In Smyrna's peaceful bay,
That here the wearied Saint might rest,
And here, by greeting friends caress'd,
Be strengthened on his way.
Ah! dear to him it was to meet
One he had known in long-passed years,—
Once more, with well-known voice, to greet,—
Once more to mingle hopes and tears.
And he—his friend—the first—the dearest—
Who all his hopes—his passions—knew—
The partner of his youth—the nearest
To help and cheer with love sincerest,
When doubts and fears around him drew,—

He, who, more close than kindred ties,
Was bound in holiest sympathies,—
He—like an angel sent—was here,
His hands to lift—his heart to cheer!
Oh! sweet their pious talk—and sweet
  Their thoughts and words of days by-gone,—
When meek, and listening at his feet,
  They saw—they heard—the Saintly John;
Yes, heard him tell what days should come
  Of banishment and martyrdom!
Ah! sweet to call again to mind
Thoughts, hopes, and fears, long left behind;
To tell how God had led their way—
  Had stayed their hearts—had heard their
    prayers—
And led them many a changeful day,
  Through toils and labours—doubts and
    snares.
Yet how their souls within them burned,—
What feelings back again returned,—
What changeful thoughts successive thrilled,—
What calm resolves their bosoms filled,
Yielding to momentary pain,
Then strengthening into faith again,—
Knowing that they should meet no more
On this side Heav'ns all-peaceful shore,—

No more each other's form behold,—
No more each glowing wish unfold,—
But part!——Oh! who can fitly tell
The grief—the joy—of that farewell!

X.

Full many a weary day had passed,—
And Rome's proud Capitol at last
Breaks on the Father's longing eyes,
With joy—with welcome—and surprise;
Ah! well he knew his hour was nigh
To join the hallowed Saints on high!
The tidings spread that one had come
To die the death of martyrdom;
The few—the faithful—thronged to meet,
And kiss, in love, those holy feet,
Which many a weary mile had trod,
In witness of the Truth of God.
What strange emotions, full and fast
Throughout their changing bosoms passed,—
Joy the long-harassed Saint to view,
Who once the blest Apostles knew;—
Ardour to hear each holy word,
Which he, from hallowed lips, had heard:—
Love to behold that time-bowed form,
Not shrinking from the ruthless storm,—

But *grief* to know how brief his stay—
How soon he must be dragged away,—
From greeting friends' embraces torn
And to the dread arena borne!
'Twas vain they spake of hopes and fears,—
'Twas vain they sued with earnest tears,—
'Twas vain they sought his life to save,
Bidding him from his judges crave
That one, with years and labours bowed,
Be spared the frantic, gazing crowd,
Who, mad with Passion's angry strife,
Were wildly-thirsting for his life;—
'Twas vain!—'twas vain!—no words could move
No tears of suppliants pressing nigh;—
They served the more his zeal to prove,—
The more his changeless love to try.
One look on high to Christ he cast,—
One pause in hushed devotion passed,—
One deep-felt prayer he raised to Heaven,—
For wrath withheld—and foes forgiven,—
One suppliant cry that God would bless
His Church amid her dark distress,—
Then, with firm step and dauntless breast,
On to the scene of death he pressed,
Without a pang—without a sigh—
Prepared the Martyr's death to die.

XI.

It was a Roman holiday,
And many a face was smiling gay
Along each thronged and public way.
White robes along the streets were flaunting,
And merry groups the pæan chaunting;
The hymn of triumph loudly rung,
And Trajan's victor-name was sung.
The games were ready—and the crowd
Was gathering there, with voices loud.
The pomp had passed;—the prætor sate,
Raised on his throne in haughty state;—
The moving feet had ceased to stir
Throughout the amphitheatre;—
Each way was thronged,—each seat was filled,—
Each breast with expectation thrilled;
The lordly senators were there
The vulgar sight of blood to share,—
Knights, joining in the people's shows,
Looked proudly from their ordered rows,—
And maidens, too, of earnest mien,
With matrons, mingled in the scene,
Filled with unwomanly delight,
Nor turned in pity from the sight;
E'en children, early used to blood,
Amid the close spectators stood!

The waiting throng, with eager breath,
Thirsting to view the Martyr's death,
With wearied and impatient eye,
Beheld the gladiators die;
With pent-up rage each breast was stirred—
Loud, and more loud, the cry was heard:—
"Fresh sports!—let other games be seen!
The lion and the Nazarene;—
Make room!—make room!—before us place
This slave of an accursed race!

XII.

Erect and calm the old man stood
In saintly, yet heroic, mood,
An aged form, with silvered brow,
And long white beard descending low—
Meek, yet majestic—with the beaming
Of heavenly glory round him streaming.
No word escaped him—not a sigh—
No tear-drop dimmed his glistening eye;
If moved his limbs it was with years—
Not with the sight of death or fears.
Staunchly he stood, with noble mien,
The gaze—the wonder—of the scene;

So peaceful and so calm of mind,
So full of faith and so resigned,
His very foes were hushed to see
The beauty of his constancy!
Oh! great is the zeal, which the soul inspires,
When Heav'n inflames it with purest desires!
And wondrous the sight, when no threat, nor pain,
Nor face of Death, nor captive chain,
Can bid the heroic breast to move
From the firm purpose of its love!

XIII.

Hark! to that wild and bursting sound,—
That deaf'ning roar that rings around!
The hungry beasts have scented blood!
"Let forth the lions!"—loud the yell—
Fiend-like and unappeasable—
Burst, as the raving of a flood,
From that infuriate multitude.
The bolts are drawn!—the bars give way—
The famished beasts behold their prey;
With frantic bound, forth, forth they spring
(No season now for rescuing;)
Nought heed they the astonished crowd,—
Nought the wild plaudits bursting loud;

With eyes of fire—with grinding fang—
Fierce on the helpless form they hang;
Down, down they drag him to the sand,
And o'er their blood-stained victim stand;
Oh! deep the groan—and dread the stroke—
Which from that scene of horror broke;
A moment!—and a sudden thrill
Suspended ev'ry gazer's breath,—
A moment!—and the pang of death
Was passed!—and all was still!
The sated beasts soon couching lie,—
A few gnawn bones were scattered by,—
The soul had joined its God on high!

XIV.

The crowd went forth!—but who shall say
What hushed emotions *there* had been?
What thoughts were wakened on that day
In those who viewed the ruthless scene?
Oh! who shall tell how many a breast—
Moved by that spectacle—confessed
The persecuted Faith could brave
The terrors of a bloody grave,—
And nerve the emboldened Saint to die
A hero's death triumphantly?

And who shall tell what zeal inflamed
That little band—oppressed—defamed;
That Christian band that lingered near,
And half in sorrow—half in fear—
The few scant relics sought with care,
In love and reverence to bear
To some still spot, where hatreds cease
And the long-laboured rest in peace.
That eve, when shades were gathering dim,
By Tiber's ripples borne along,
Far from the persecuting throng,
Was heard the Christian's parting hymn;
Not loud with Music's mournful strain,
Or dead-march for a hero slain;
Faintly it rose 'mid silence lone,
The echo scarce could catch its tone;
From pious lips its accents fell,
Breathing a holy—fond—farewell!

DIRGE.

He hath gone to his rest!
And hath left us in sorrow behind him;
He sleeps with the blest,
Where no tyrant—no trouble—can find him.

Oh! heave not the sigh!
His dark course on earth he hath ended;
With seraphs on high,
His soul to its God hath ascended.

His limbs may be torn!
But his spirit with Jesus is sleeping;
Till the bright glory-morn
It shall rest undisturbed in his keeping.

Sweet spirit! farewell!
We will not—as hopeless—deplore thee;—
In faith we will dwell
On the bright shores which glitter before thee!

THE MARTYRS.

Amat, ardet, fervet, calcat omnia quæ delectant, et transit: venit ad aspera, horrenda, truculenta, minacia, calcat, frangit et transit.—*Aug. de Verb. Apost.*

PART THIRD.

I.

Oh! for the gift of Him, whose eye
  Beheld the veil of Time unfolding,
  And (like one in a dream beholding
Things which his thought could ne'er descry
  In waking hours) inspiredly
Caught the far visions of the sky
  In all their glorious radiancy.

Oh! for the gift of Him, who scanned,
With ravished gaze, that city bright,
In pure, celestial sheen expand,
Descending from that Heav'n of light,
The presence of the Infinite!
Oh! but one moment to behold
That city's high and sparkling gates—
Its brilliant walls—its streets of gold—
Which God himself irradiates.
But, ah! to few the gift is given
To gaze into the op'ning Heav'n,
And view, with deep and rapt surprize,
Apocalyptic Mysteries:—
Enough! that Wisdom has unsealed
The sacred truths to man revealed;
Enough! that Faith and Hope may dwell
On glories unrevealable;
And leading in the narrow way
To yon calm Heav'n can catch the ray
Of ev'ning-less and lasting day.

II.

Why to the Seer's prophetic sight
Did Heav'n unfold its glories bright?

Why did he hear that voice profound,
Like noise of many waters, sound?
Why view that form—august—revered,
Clothed with a garment, lowly flowing,
His hair than wool, than snow, more white,
His breast with golden girdle dight—
And eyes of flame, which, keenly glowing,
Like lamps of burning light appeared?
In sooth that he might hear and see
The things which were—the things to be—
Though veiled in dazzling mystery;
That he might pierce beyond the bound
Of Time and Sense which close us round
And shut the soul's imprisoned eye,
From gazing to those realms on high,
Where rapt and radiant seraphs dwell,
In blaze of light ineffable.
Nor to his Heav'n-filled sight were shown
Thrones—glories—scenes of light—alone,—
Prophetic accents filled his ear
The Spirit's holiest voice revealing,
Calling the lukewarm Church to hear
Each warning charge—each solemn token—
To Asia's seven angels spoken,
For watchless slumber round them stealing.

Ah! that so soon the lustrous ray,
In spreading shadows, should decay!
So soon the flame, which shone so bright,
Be dimmed in closing, thick'ning night!
Yet deem we not each angel heard
Alike the sharp and chiding word;
To Smyrna's Church approof was given
That she was true and leal to Heav'n;
Though sorely tempted, she had been
Faithful in each assailment seen;
By many a persecution torn,
Through many a sweeping tempest borne,
A true Church militant she stood,
Her faith—her patience—unsubdued;
Still reaching through the struggling strife,
To gain the glorious crown of life.
Her Bishop—graced—not bowed—by Time,
A hero-saint, devout, sublime,
In years—yet not in heart—grown old,
Watchful in peace—in dangers bold,—
Still through each change, each trial, strove
To keep his charge in patient love;
And well he nerved each heart to bear
The open wrong—the secret snare,—
To suffer ills, and torturing pain,
From tyrant judge, and prison chain;

To strive—to watch—to overcome,
Through tears—through blood—through martyrdom,—
True to the last expiring breath,
Unmoved and faithful unto death.

III.

The Heathen's wrath—the tyrant's will—
Year after peaceful year was still;
The Church had rest!—no more she sate,
Like a lone widow, desolate,
But bright and hopeful as a bride,
With peace and gladness o'er her spreading,
And children gathering at her side,
And piety around her treading,
In grace and peace was multiplied.
For years her prayers—her praises—rose,
Unmocked by scorn—unchecked by foes;
For years—as if from Heav'n it streamed,
The smile of sunshine round her beamed;
For years within her tranquil breast
The dove of peace found welcome rest;
And, fearless of Oppression's eye,
Basked in unscared security.

But ah! how long can peace abide
Mid earth's unstable time and tide?
A change was near;—the rising cloud
Foretold of tempests gathering loud.
The Roman state, by discontent,
Distress, and doubt, and war, was rent;
The iron army of the North
Had called her locust legions forth;
Lax rule Aurelius feebly held
O'er subject hordes, but partly quelled;
In vain, through philosophic pages,
He sought the lore of by-gone ages,
From sophists, chroniclers, and sages,
His vast, unwieldy empire lay
Too wide to own a single sway;—
Revolt and Rapine, unrestrained,
Each day new front—new daring—gained;
Throughout the stricken empire spread
A pestilence, in fury dread,
Bowing still more its sunken head.
What could such wrath—such scourges—bring?
What armed the dark contagion's wing?
What called the angry curse of Heav'n
In desolating deluge driven?
What but that Atheist sect—accursed—
For whom the wrath of Heav'n was nursed

Till o'er the land it darkly burst ;*
And in o'erwhelming havoc fell
For silenced hymn and oracle,
For altars, where no victim bled,
And temple-courts unvisited.
Such charge, in evil hour conceived,
Too soon the fickle crowd believed ;
Onward it flew—and Rumour's wing
Bore wide the dark conjecturing,
Fanning anew the smothered flame
Against the by-word, Christian name,—
Till Justice—Reason—Mercy—fled,
And angry Riot wildly spread,
Where Peace had long inhabited ;
Dark-eyed Suspicion, whispering wide,
Spread feud and fear on ev'ry side.

IV.

Smyrna had fiercely felt the stroke—
The scourge of angry Heav'n,
And here the tempest wildly broke,
In all its fury driv'n.

* On account of the Christians refusing to worship the fabled gods of the Greeks and Romans, they were often accused and condemned as Atheists.

The crowd which fain believed the cry,
That the new sect enraged the sky,
And urged the dread calamity,
Was waiting but some fitting tide
To spread its pent-up vengeance wide.
The games grew dull;—the sated eye
Ached with the sights of cruelty;
The gladiator's fight was o'er,
Hushed was the wounded lion's roar,
Passions the vilest, unconfined,
Tossed to and fro the fevered mind;
When rose a voice amid the crowd
Breaking, like dæmon-prompting, loud,
"Of gladiator's fights no more—
Or wrestlers on the gory floor,—
Some novel sight—some stirring game,—
Enough of spectacles so tame;—
The Christians bring,—away—away!
No age, no sex, no station, spare!
Hale, hale, them forth without delay,—
Why longer these vile recreants bear?
The Christians to the theatre."
The cry was raised—the flame was lit—
And nought but blood could stifle it.
Like waves, from broken flood-gates, bursting,
Or rav'ning wolves for carnage thirsting,

Or clouds across the welkin driven,
When rack and tempest sweep the Heaven;
Thus fleet and wild the rabble flew,
Spreading the startled city through;
Each church—each house—they entered rude,
Each lone and peaceful solitude.
Not few unshrinking hearts they found,
Not few with cruel bands they bound,—
No fond farewells! no time—no stay—
They drag them through each crowded way;—
On to the circus, on they press,
With breasts of hate and ruthlessness.
Falters one heart? resists one hand?
Ah no! a calm, a holy band,
Before that frantic mob they stand!

V.

'Twere harsh to gentle ears to tell
The hellish deeds which there befell.
How some to scorching stakes were bound,
Some torn by raging beasts around,
Some flayed,—some slowly o'er the fire
Burned on a living funeral pyre.
But nobly there, brave hearts, they stood
In high, in holy fortitude;

Confronting Death without a fear—
Enduring pangs without a tear;
How firm they stood! prepared to die,
With faithful breast, and dauntless eye,
Endurance was their victory!
Heroes indeed, with hearts, which Heav'n
A tenfold gift of zeal had given,
Looking, with calm, unshrinking gaze,
On racking cross, or fagots' blaze,
Smiling at Death, as though he came
Most welcome, though with sword or flame,
To loose the struggling bonds of life,
And free them from the mortal strife.
And now this martyred host had gone,
Their spirits parted one by one;
The flames were burning faint and dim,
The sated beasts had torn each limb;
But still the crowd *unsated* stood,
Thirsting, more keen than beasts, for blood;
When loud the outcry burst around—
"Let Polycarp himself be found!"

VI.

'Twas night! and silence, hushed and still,
Was resting upon vale and hill;

The peaceful stars were bright on high,
Beaming so soft and tranquilly;
The lovely moon reflected lay
In Smyrna's wide, unruffled bay,
Which spread all still, as if each wave
Was sleeping deep in ocean's cave,
Leaving its breast unwrinkled there,
To mirror back the star-beams fair;
The cypress top—the feathery palm—
Waved not amid the silent calm,
But all so stirless lay and bright,
Bathed in the moon's transparent light.
'Twas night! and stilly, soothing Sleep
Hovered o'er Nature, hushed and deep,
Care its dark load had cast aside,—
The tear on Sorrow's lid was dried;—
Fame, glory, honour, riches, now
Ceased to perplex the throbbing brow;
The close and subtle schemes of day
In Slumber's lap unravelled lay;
The aching heart forgot its ill,
And Labour's wearying wheel was still.
Oh! sweet the gift which slumber sheds!
Sweet the blest boon which Mercy spreads
O'er sorrowing hearts and care-bound heads!

VII.

Said I that all was lulled and still
From weary care and worldly ill?
Said I that all in calmness lay
Beneath that tranquillizing ray,
Which seemed in one embrace of love
To clasp earth, sea, and air above?
Yes! winds were still—and ocean's breast,
And Care and Labour were at rest;
But angry passions could not sleep
In that soft silence, hushed and deep;
No! dark Revenge and cruel Hate—
Wild, restless, and insatiate—
These could not own the soft'ning power,
The hallowed stillness of that hour;
These could not feel the cares of day
Melt with the melting light away;
Labour and Toil, and Tears and Grief,
May find in Slumber's lap relief,
But bursts of wrath and passion's din,
Vexing the fevered heart within,
Scare the sweet halcyon sleep,—too blest
To stay where strifes of Hell molest.
Three days did furious rage pursue
In jealous search the city through;
Three nights the thirst for blood untired
Each breast to keen excitement fired;

But thirst for blood and Hate's quick eye
Failed, though unwearied, to descry
The holy Father's secrecy,
Till, Judas-like, a traitor's foot
Led Malice in its keen pursuit,
Stealing beneath the veil of night,
Too base to meet the day's pure light;
Forsooth, so foul, so dark, a deed
The blackest cloak of night must need!
Yet darkest Hell too light would seem—
And blackness cast too bright a beam—
For that foul foot which leads the way
The good—the guiltless—to betray,—
For that dark look which can espy
A trusting friend's security!

VIII.

By traitor led, the envoys trace
The peaceful Father's hiding-place;
And yet, albeit, there they stood,
With looks of rage in fellest mood,
Struck with amaze was that wild band
To see him all unruffled stand;
So placid—saintly—void of fear—
Though treason's—torture's—hand was near;

Yet more amazed to view the grace,
The beaming mildness of that face;
That calm composure of his cheek;
That form so noble, yet so meek;
That firm, heroic look of love,
Which told that hope was fixed above
There in those happy realms of Heav'n,
Though peace and rest from earth were driv'n.
Awhile they looked bewildered on—
  They could not seize—they could not bind,—
Each seemed as spell-bound by that tone—
  That look—that mien—so soft—so kind.
Well wist the Saint what errand brought
  That traitor to his still retreat;
Well wist he his pursuers sought
  To lead—to drag him forth—to meet
The public scorn—the insulting breath—
  The Christian's doom—the Martyr's death.
But be it so! He bade prepare
  The choicest of his humble fare,
Nay, spread his board for that black band,
With kind and hospitable hand;
Entreating one short hour,—and he
Would follow with them joyfully.
  Oh! could the sternest breast forbear
Such meek request, so humbly craved?

Or are there feelings so depraved,—
Or breasts so pitiless to tear
A weak old man away, whose years
Each common sympathy reveres,—
Nor one brief respite-moment spare?
It matters not;—I know that then
Compassion touched those ruthless men;
Twice-told, the time he asked, was given
In warmest, holiest prayer to Heav'n;
And e'en those hearts of hardest stone,
Erewhile unmoved by pity's tone,
Suspended seemed in deepest awe,
As they that saintly elder saw,
Fervent to God, with kindling eye,
Look up in trustiest constancy,
Imploring faith to bear that hour,
The gazer's scorn, the torture's power;
Imploring mercy, too, for them,
Who, led by Treason's stratagem,
Were panting, with impatient breath,
To glut their hatred with his death.

IX.

The concourse met. The judgment seat
Was crowded round with thronging feet;

The prefect sate,—but not a word
Of crime or charge for death was heard;
Yet looked he on that meek old man,—
And pity for an instant ran
Throughout his stern, cold breast to see
Such form of reverenceable age,
By cruel and insatiate rage,
Exposed to mock and infamy.
"Swear," said the judge, "by Cæsar swear,
Thine agéd limbs, O Father, spare;
'Away with Atheists,'—lift the cry,
Nor stand a gazing-stock to die."
Erect the dauntless Martyr stood;
And waving o'er that multitude
His thin and trembling hand on high,
As if he would their host defy,
And back on them in firmness turn
The burthen of their hate and scorn,
In hero zeal, in holy pride,
"Avaunt! ye Infidels," he cried.
"Swear, Father, swear; that name deny,
Nor as a malefactor die
For One, who not Himself could save
From anguished death—from withering
grave."——

"Deny that name, that sacred name,
And earn a dark apostate's shame!
Deny my Lord! For four-score years,
Through snares, temptations, trials, fears,
From fury's hate—oppression's din—
From foes without—from doubts within,—
That Holy One has led my way,
Nor failed me in the darkest day;
Oft has He healed this aching breast,
Oft sent my troubled spirit rest;
For me He bled; for me He died;
For me was torn and crucified;
For me He entered yon bright sky,
And intercedes with God on high.
And shall I, then, his name revile
With craven fear and traitor guile?
No! rather welcome death and pain,
Though every limb could live again,
And oft renewed from flame and fire
A hundred times in pain expire!"

X.

I need not tell from first to last
What changing passions, wild and fast,
Throughout that living tumult passed;

I need not tell what voices loud
Roared in hoarse accents through that crowd,
  Filling each breast with hate,
Till, like a forest, tempest-stirred,
Swelling more deep its groans were heard
  Fierce, and infuriate.
Nor need I tell how like a rock
That old man stood the tempest shock
  In all its frenzy borne,
With heart, which mid each scoff and ill,
Beat all so warm, so deeply still,
  With pity more than scorn.
Enough to say that mercy's strain
Is heard by ruthless ears in vain;
Enough to say how quick the fire,
By malice lit, and fanned by ire,
Soon speeds and spreads,—till all around
Is in the common fury bound;
Thus flamed that crowd;—and wild it ran
Impetuous on that weak old man;
They urge him mid their wave-like throng
From street to noisy street along,
Where numbers, like a swelling tide,
Press to the scene from every side,
With merry laugh and faces gay,
As on a festive holiday.

XI.

Eager, as on his morning watch,
The eastern out-post stands to catch
  The blush of dawning day;—
Far-stretched, as when, from some wild waste,
The ship-wrecked seaman's eye has traced
  The white sail far away;—
So eager stood that gazing press,
With looks of growing weariness,—
So far-stretched was each impulse keen
Throughout that lagging, lingering scene.
Yet peaceful there that old man stood,
In faith—in firmness—unsubdued;
No imprecating word he spoke;
No murmur from his bosom broke;
Manly his mien;—no threat, no shame,
Could stir his spirit's tranquil frame.
His humble cloak he laid aside,—
His sandals from his feet untied,—
With the calm dignity we see
In unassumed simplicity;
All as unmoved as if preparing
His garb to loose, for sleep repairing;
While crowding friends around him pressed,
And every pious limb caressed;

Earnest to give the parting grasp,
Ardent the long-loved form to clasp,
Before the flames' consuming sheet
Should lay it smouldering at their feet.

XII.

And now, each preparation done,
That peopled mass looked fiercely on;
They saw the saintly Father stand,—
They saw the executing band—
From human pity freed—
The ready fagots round him pile,
With willing hand, and fiendish smile,
Well worthy such a deed!
One boon they heard the old man crave,
That they a needless task would save,
Nor nail him to the stake;
"For He, who gives me strength to bear
The Martyr's death without a fear,
Will not my heart forsake;
But grant me fortitude to stand,
While round me burns each scorching brand."
Not vain his pleading;—quick were bound
With thongs those feeble limbs around.
All is suspense!—its clamour rude,
An instant hushed that multitude,

With still and deep-held breath to see
The first pangs of his agony;
As if each feeling else was gone,
Or swallowed up in this alone,
To see the spiry flames arise,
And feed upon their sacrifice!

XIII.

Oh! heart of man! how deep thy hate,
Dark, deadly, and insatiate;
When wrath assumes the place of love,
Implacable and hard to move!
Here stood a Patriarch full of years,
A sight to move a statue's tears,
With silvered head, where age and woe
Had strewn their century of snow;
Without a charge, without a crime,
In calm, unblenching faith sublime;
With eye in mercy's radiance beaming,
And brow where purest love was gleaming.
Oh! had you wandered Smyrna through,
Her haunts of wretchedness to view,—
Had you with pity's glance drawn nigh
To each dark spot of misery,—
Sought out her homes of sin and care,—
Or tracked the step of lone despair

To its uncheered abiding-place ;—
Go where you would, however drear
With adverse cloud, or sorrowing tear,
Where want, where woe was,—you would trace
That holy Father's foot-print there.
And yet, I trow, 'twere hard to tell
Which burned the more unquenchable,
That living storm, that angry flood,
Which clamoured hoarsely for his blood,—
Or that wild flame, whose furious rage,
Nor pile nor fagot could assuage,
Until it had, with vampire breath,
Sated its hungry roar in death !

XIV.

Hast thou, with hushed and solemn tread,
Stood by a dying Christian's bed,
When pain, and tears, and grief have fled,
Just ere the spirit wings away
To full and everlasting day ?
Hast seen his eye with lustre brighten ?
His faith to holiest triumph heighten ?
His features, erewhile chill and white,
Glowing with pure celestial light ?
His placid frame all full of rest,
And hands crossed meekly on his breast ?

As if earth, weakness, death, and dread,
In the bright hope before him spread,
Had one by one evanished.
Such was the rapture and the grace,
Such the calm light of form and face,
Such the strong faith and triumph seen
In all that holy Martyr's mien,
As there he stood, with beaming eye
Turned in rapt transport to the sky,
Unheeding all that passed around
Of scaring sight or angry sound,
Eager alone, with parting breath,
To glorify his God in death.

XV.

Speed thee, brave Martyr, on thy way,
Soon dawns the everlasting day;
That very flame that fires thy pile
Is but the first and radiant smile
Of a far brighter, holier light
Of glory breaking on thy sight!
Soon will this din and fury cease,
And thy soul enter into peace,
Passing away from fiendish cries,
To soft celestial symphonies!

Speed thee, brave Martyr, speed thee well,
With heart and hope invincible;
The self-same pang which ends the strife,
Shall land thee on the shores of Life!
A moment more—that pang is past;
A moment more—and, sinking fast,
The mystic tide shall cease to beat,
And hovering angels wait to meet
Thy holy spirit soaring free,
Unscathed to immortality!
Speed thee, brave Martyr, speed thee well!
Hark! what rapt voices o'er thee swell!
See! see! the shining hosts on high
Wait with the harps of victory,
Burning to strike the golden string,
As soars thy soul on upward wing!

XVI.

The pile was lit;—the crowd, amazed,
With eyes of exultation gazed,
As bright the hungry fuel blazed;—
The red flame fierce and fiercer grew,
And o'er each wild face quivering threw
Its hot and ruddy glare;
Then upward to the open sky,

Rolled like a billowy wave on high,
Calling for witness there.
It was the Jewish Sabbath day,
Yet Jews were foremost in the fray;
Alas! the holiest, calmest rest,
Appeals in vain to maddened breast,
For the vexed mind, where anger glows,
No tranquil Sabbatism knows!
What! though it were a day apart,—
A day to hush the fevered heart,—
No rigid Pharisee, I ween,
Though it the Paschal feast had been,
Would turn from that exciting scene,
The torture of a Nazarene;
So deep were hate and rancour stored
Against the name of Israel's Lord.
But lo! yon fire-sheet spreading high,
Folding like glittering drapery,—
A bellying, sail-like, circling flame,—
Around the Martyr's radiant frame,
A lambent stream,—a halo bright,—
A gleam of more than earthly light,—
A car of fire, as if to raise
The parting spirit in its blaze,
With beaming glory up on high,
Elijah-like to yon bright sky!

XVII.

How quick the surging passions roll,
Changeful and changing, through the soul!
Swift as the shifting hues which pass
Across some lake's unruffled glass,
When deep and still its waters lie
Beneath the moonlit, midnight sky;—
Now marked with cloudlets fleecy white,
Edged with translucent silver light;
Now imaging in pearly streams
The moon's encalming spirit beams;
Now tinted with the gleams of blue,
Breaking the cloud-sprent ether through;
Now mapping ev'ry lovely star,
In night's rich crownal gleaming far;—
Thus, intermitting fleet and fast,
Each light and darkened impulse passed,
  In quick and changing tide,
Throughout that moving human sea,
Swaying its breast alternately
  With varied passions wide;
Now filling it with wondering dread,
As the wild flames innocuous spread;
Now holding it in restless pain
Lest that fierce pile were lit in vain;
Now quelling the inhuman strife,
Which panted for the Martyr's life;

Now bidding—for a moment—spare
That brow which beamed so saintly there;
And but a moment!—for the cry
Of baffled hate rose clamourously,
Impatient lest the fiery storm
Should scathless leave that radiant form.
Nought wrecked it that the circling flame
Enveloped that transfigured frame,
As if from earth the Saint to claim;
The sword must drink life's ling'ring flood,
And quench that flagging flame in blood.
Deeply the rending blade was driv'n,
The tie of life apart was riv'n,
The soul arose midst light to Heav'n!

XVIII.

And now the failing fires grew dim,
Wasting around each smouldering limb;
That saintly form, erewhile so bright,
Sunk darkly mid the embers white;
Fevered excitement raged no more;
The sight, the scene, of blood was o'er;
The massed spectators passed away,—
As dense clouds pass at the break of day,—
Leaving all still and dark around
The ember-strewn and reeking ground

Wet with the warm and gory stain
Of righteous blood, not spilt in vain!
For deem not that it fell to earth
  Unpitied and unblest;
Like rain of holy, heavenly birth
  Upon the desert's breast,
Making the wilderness to sing
With many a fruitful blossoming,—
So fell that tide, a fertile shower
Of quick'ning might and holy power,
Causing full many a bosom there—
Whilome a desert of despair—
To lift its thought to heav'n above,
And kindle into Christian love;
Owning *that* Faith, whose upward gaze
Could shrink not at the spreading blaze;
Owning that Faith, whose steady eye
Unquailed could look on torture nigh;
Owning that Faith, whose mighty arm
Could death of all its pangs disarm,
And make the parting spirit dwell
On sights and sounds unspeakable!

XIX.

Oh! holy is the Martyr's death,
For angels catch his parting breath!

Oh! holy is the Martyr's blood,
No flame, no earth, can hide its flood!
It cannot sink!—it soars on high,
In red, warm stains it blots the sky;
Up to Heav'n's gate its voice is sent
In silent utterings eloquent!
And there, with trumpet-tongue, it cries
For vengeance on its enemies;
There, there, it stills the swelling song
Of hosts and angels shining bright,
" Crying—" How long, O God, how long
Dost thou in judgment not requite!"
Till Heav'n's dark plagues, with fury stored,
Are on each guilty region poured.
Thus fared it with that city proud,—
Thus fared it with that Heathen crowd;—
Soon Smyrna felt the angry wrath
Of Him, who makes the storm His path,
And in the earthquake's hollow moan
Heard, as from God, the avenging tone.
Her glory passed;—her faded state
In desolation's ruin sate!
Dread God! what pow'r, what state can stand,
When Thou dost lift Thy scourging hand!
Through ev'ry home the panic spread;
Through ev'ry street were tombless dead;
And many a costly fane destroyed,
Was swallowed in the yawning void.

XX.

The Heathen then, in frantic strain,
Called on their helpless gods in vain;
In vain their succour they invoked;
In vain their laden altars smoked;
All was affright, distrust, and dread,
The living mingled with the dead;
Men's quailing hearts amazed with fear
For darker judgments swelling near.
And yet amid the wild affray,
Mid desolation and dismay,
The Christian band, with praises, trod
The secret temples of their God;
And there, from rocks and caves, was heard
The hymn, which trust and fervor stirred,
A hymn of faith to Him above,
The God of mercy and of love.

HYMN.

O God! how wonderful Thy ways,
We bow before Thee.
Filled with the endless greatness of Thy praise,
Lo! we adore Thee.

Thou the beginning didst create,
Vast Uncreated;
Eternal ages, which no thought can date,
From Thee are dated.
From Thee the morn of the first day
Had its outgoing;
To Thee, and from Thee, Time's vast ocean grey
Ever is flowing.
The sun, from Thee its source and power,
Shines in its brightness;
From Thee the moon scatters its silver shower
Of spirit whiteness.
Thine are the stars!—Thy framing hands
Filled them with lustre,—
Wide, through the deep expanse, their brilliant bands
Endlessly cluster.
The winds are Thine! swift on their wings
Viewless Thou ridest;
Their bounds are fixed,—and their wild utterings
To peace Thou chidest.
The thunders are Thy heralds loud,
Awe-struck we hear them.
The light'nings, gleaming through the rifted cloud,
Tell Thou art near them.

Earthquakes, empowered by Thy command,
Shake the deep mountains;
Thou holdest in the hollow of Thy hand,
Rivers and fountains.
Why heed we, then, though seas be stirred,
And earth be shaken?
Why tremble though the whirlwind's voice be heard
Loudly to waken?
Thou art our God, and Thou our Trust,
Oh! then we fear not!
Though unhinged Nature, crumbling, sink to dust,
Its crash we hear not.
Our souls, our lives, O Lord! are Thine,
Thy love will save them;
Soon must they rise to Thee, their source divine,
Whose breath first gave them!

THE LIFE PRESENT AND THE LIFE TO COME.

An Allegory.

Io vidi avvicinarsi con maestoso portamento una larva, simile alle immagini consolari, avvolta in candida toga. Il volto benigno spirava una dolce dignità; solo a vederla conciliava rispetto, destava la maraviglia. All' apparire della quale tutte le altre uscirono dalle tombe, e la circondarono con segni manifesti di onorarla. Mormoravano anche in suono simile a' gemiti, il quale esprimere io non posso.—*Verri.*

The sun was in the ocean;—the stars were in the sky;
All Nature seemed transformed to stone, it lay so silently;
The winds were sleeping on the waves, like halcyons at rest,
And slumber's strong and giant foot on still creation pressed.

The moon was in the Heav'n, and its image on
the sea,
And earth beneath its radiance was sleeping
tranquilly;
For not a sound was stirring o'er woodland, hill,
or stream,
Save at intervals from belfry-tower was heard
the owlet's scream.

Afar from din of cities,—afar from noise and
care,—
I wandered in a burial spot,—and many a grave
was there;
The dead were all beneath me,—the dead were
all around,—
And the feeling crept upon me that I stood on
hallowed ground.

Beneath the grey church-tower—beside the chan-
try lone,—
Mid mounds, and tombs, and crosses, and many
a church-yard stone,
I paced until my soul partook the stillness of
the hour,
And mind, and sense, and thought were held as
by enchanter's power.

A vision passed before me, as there entranced I stood,
Two spirit-forms of kindred mould, a mystic brotherhood,
They wore the features each of each, but one was sunny bright,
The other had a garb of woe like gloomy eremite.

I gazed upon the mantling stole which wrapt him like a cloud,
And now it seemed a wedding-robe, and now it seemed a shroud;
Anon 'twas like a moonlit sky of white and fleecy form,
Then black as midnight's darkest watch, or woof of gathering storm.

His burning brow was graven with sickness, pain, and fears,
His breast was fraught with burdened sighs,—his eye with scalding tears;
And, as his slow and feeble step along the earth he bore,
The flint, the briar, and the thorn, all rent and pierced him sore.

And if a moment o'er his face the smile of
pleasure gleamed,
The dark eclipse of coming care enwrapt it as it
beamed;
'Twas like the shadow and the sun,—for when
the smile alit,
Sorrows were hovering close behind, and soon
enclouded it.

And when he plucked the golden fruit the tree
of promise bore,
It was not sweet as he had deemed, but bitter
at the core;
Or when he raised the sparkling cup his aching
thought to drown,
Some viewless hand withheld the draught, and
dashed the chalice down.

He raised his hand, as if to speak, his pale lips
shrunk apart,
And words, with interwoven sobs, rose heavy
from his heart;
I spake not,—breathed not,—ev'ry pulse was
checked in listening dread,—
So low—so bitter—was the tone,—like mourner
o'er the dead:—

"I am a man of cares," he said, "a curse
enfolds me round:
Curséd for me is man's estate,—and curséd is
the ground;
Here, in this cumbered body, I bear the seeds
of sin,
And God's bright image, once so fair, is stained
and marred within.

"My soul was lit from Heav'n, and my spirit
breathed from God;
My happy parents once possessed the groves
where angels trod;
The whispering notes of Eden were the sounds
that filled their ear;
And, every spot so holy was, they felt that God
was near.

"But where are fled those angel-guests? and
where is Eden now?
And where that shining innocence that graced
my parents' brow?
That Eden spot is faded,—those angel forms
are fled,—
And *they*,—the guilty ones,—the cursed,—are
gathered with the dead.

" And I, their late descendant, am man of mortal
birth,
In sin conceived,—in sin brought forth,—to
tread a blighted earth;
The 'sin which dwelleth in me,'—a fountain
dark and deep,—
Like poison, fills my heart with pain, and makes
my soul to weep.

" If that soul would soar to Heav'n—it soon to
earth returns,—
If the flame of love is lit within, ah! languidly
it burns!
And faith, and holy piety, and every good desire,
Just faintly shine—just dimly glow—as ready
to expire.

" My days are days of darkness, uncertain is
their stay;
Within my inmost heart I bear the seeds of slow
decay;
A creature as of yesterday, my moments quickly
pass,—
At morning green,—at eve cut down,—and
withered as the grass.

" When manhood's strength is round me I vex
my heart with cares;
For my soul is spread temptations—for my feet
a thousand snares;
And when age is stealing on me, and my frame
is bending low,
I carry nothing to the grave, but a wreck of pain
and woe.

" Oh! never from this weary load of sin can I
be free,
Till this mortal form is 'clothed upon' with
immortality,—
Till earth is past—the victory won—and ceased
the mortal strife—
And death, redeemed from pain and curse, is
'swallowed up' of life."

He ceased, and from his burthened heart I heard
the broken sigh,
And saw a tear, just lit with hope, was starting
in his eye,
As if the thought stole o'er him that a rest might
yet be given—
A better home—a better land—in the golden
realms of Heaven.

But scarcely had he ended, when that angel being bright
His hand upraised so peacefully to the skies of starry light,
That I could but gaze upon him, and it charmed me to behold,—
No mortal visitant was he,—no form of earthly mould.

No taint of sin was on him,—no tear-drop dimmed his eye;
Bright was his pure, unruffled brow in calm tranquillity;
The smile of Heaven was beaming upon his radiant face,
And every look, and every stir, was one of angel grace.

His robe was spotless whiteness, of rich and glist'ning sheen;
His clustering locks of falling gold adown his neck were seen;
And on his brow of brightness, outshining many a gem,
He wore a crown of dazzling light—a glorious diadem.

His face it beamed with Heaven, so peaceful
did it seem ;
His voice was like a seraph's voice heard in
some happy dream ;
And in his eyes' blue depths there shone an
ecstasy so clear,
Which told of other shores of bliss, and of some
other sphere.

As he raised his hand to Heaven, you could see
the stars shine through,
For no mortal flesh enwrapt him, and no stain
of earthly hue ;
He had laid aside the body's load, from human
frailty free,
And, in the lustrous light of life, was shining
gloriously.

Oh ! ne'er from harp or organ, or viol's sweetest
strings,
Fell notes of Heav'n and music like that angel's
utterings,
As looking to the skies above, he called our
souls away
To thoughts of faith, and hope, and peace, in
an eternal day.

"I once, like you," he whispered, walked "on the changing earth,
A man of woes,—a man of cares,—a man of mortal birth;—
I sighed the sigh,—I shed the tear,—I knew the bosom's smart,—
The sinking and the anguish of a bruised and broken heart.

"I, too, have felt the fevered hand of sickness on my brow,—
Have borne the dull and cumbrous load which makes the body bow;
Have known the hard and mortal strife,—the agony of death,—
The pang, the struggle, and the gasp, of the last and parting breath.

"The sere-cloth has enwrapt me, and the cold white winding-sheet;
I have slept the quiet church-yard sleep, where peer and peasant meet;
The earth has been above me,—the grave-stone and the sod,—
But my soul has joined its fountain,—the presence of its God.

"From sin redeemed, and washed from stain, I
stand amid the throng,
Which round the high and holy throne attune
the eternal song,
Where pain, and grief, and sighs, and tears, for
ever disappear,
And God from off all faces has wiped the bitter
tear.

"We thirst no more, and hunger not,—the day
of pain is passed;
We feel no heat of Summer's sun,—no Winter's
chilly blast;
No sin can enter near us,—no care, nor gather-
ing shade,
For there no denizen is sick, and 'none can
make afraid.'

"Oh! mortal, who yet treadest the desert's
tangled maze,
Beyond the bound of time and space, lift oft the
longing gaze;
No eye hath seen—no ear hath heard—no heart
can understand—
The brightness and the blessedness of that
eternal land.

"We, like the glorious Son of God, in those
bright realms appear,
And rank by rank around His throne, draw
reverently near;
No longer darkly through a glass we see that
radiant face,
But as He is we see Him, in pure, excelling
grace.

"The vigil we have kept; the race and fight
are done;
The toil of life is ended; and the victory is won;
The blissful gate is entered; the sparkling
pavement trod;
And we drink of streams eternal from out the
throne of God.

"Faith yields to full fruition;—no anxious
fears we know;
No hope deferred,—no wish delayed,—which
tried the heart below;
No more the prayer is needed, but in praises we
adore,
And sing to sweetest harps of gold rapt strains
for evermore.

"All holy is our city, and glorious to behold;
Its gates stand ever open—its gates of jewelled gold;
And there no temple is,—no sun, nor moonlight streaming fair;
For the Lord God is the temple,—and the Lamb the lustre there.

"And in this bright inheritance we wear the form divine,
As stars, for ever and for ever, most gloriously we shine;
But, casting down our starry crowns, all love and praise are given
To Him, who washed us in His blood, and made us meet for Heaven."

He ended:—and the stars on high seemed brighter still to glow,
The cloud passed from that furrowed brow—that brow of grief and woe;
I saw no more;—I heard no more;—save this departing strain:—
"Farewell! till the appointed time;—in Heav'n we meet again."

The moon went down;—the waning stars were
fading one by one;
And the first pale streaks along the east foretold
the coming sun;
I left that spot;—but ever dear to memory will
it be,
Where first I learned through life to hope for
Immortality.

NATURE'S ENDURABLENESS AND MAN'S BREVITY.

SUGGESTED BY "LES HARMONIES RELIGIEUSES" PAR ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE.

Vivez donc vos jours sans mesure!
Terre et ciel! céleste flambeau!
Montagnes, mers, et toi, Nature,
Souris longtemps sur mon tombeau!
Effacé du livre de vie,
Que le néant même m'oublie!
J'admire, et ne suis point jaloux!
Ma pensée a vécu d'avance
Et meurt avec une espérance
Plus impérissable que vous.—*Lamartine.*

Roll, ye bright stars! roll in your distant depths,—
The measureless infinitude of worlds;
Roll on, ye countless systems, and o'erwhelm,

With your almost eternity, my soul;—
In the far firmament, invisible
Save to His eye from whom ye emanate;
Roll on, silent, august, sublime, profound.

Ethereal deep of Heav'n! whose isles are stars,
Through which, like ships freighted with purest
light,
The planets brightly move,—abysmal space,—
In your still unimaginable vast
The mind is lost, and calculation fails.

Ocean! whose hoary brow reflects the beams
From the blue depths above, thy goings forth
Are from eternity,—yet is thy flow
Now, as of yesterday; what mystic sounds
Moan over thee, filling the listening soul
With deep imaginations of thy voice;
With interchanging ebb and tide, the same
Thou art as on Creation's wond'ring morn,—
Yet generations, kingdoms, dynasties,
Have ris'n—increased to greatness—passed away.

Dawn of each day! who ne'er hast weariéd
Since the first morning to proclaim the light
From dim, grey, chilly, watch-towers of the east,

Shed thy pale beam, melt into day, and die;
Again to break above the mountain-tops,
Filling the spaces of the cold, white sky
With their cloud-forms, as the mist curls away;
Brief as thou art, thou still wilt look from Heav'n,
When I—when many a fleeting age—have gone.

O passing race of man! which, like the dust,
Art agitated:—and as silvery haze
Passest away,—changeful as changing sands
Upon the beach, which every tide sweeps o'er;
In thee I am as nothing, but a wave
In a wide ocean, onward swept, absorbed
In the deep bosom of unresting Time.
Succeeding ages! silent and swift-paced,
Soon shall ye bear my name,—my memory,—
To shades of dim oblivion, where the sound
Of Fame's faint echo ceases; the frail stone,
Whose epitaph is but the homily
Of human nothingness, shall wear away,
And cease to chronicle a name forgot.

Thou, Nature! in thy yearly season-tide,
And bright rejuvenescence, wilt bring round
The first green leaf;—the verdurous summer
months;—

The sear and mourning weeds of Autumn, moist
With tears, and, widow-like, bewailing loud
In the drear, dirgeful sigh of the West wind,
All that she loved and hallowed, passed away;
Yet thou, with all thy oft vicissitudes
Of light and shade,—of beauty and decay,—
Canst not unspirit or annihilate
The intellectual being, which from God
Had its beginning, and to Him returns.
The eye of God has seen me,—and his hand
Has registered my being;—of His life—
Infinite, immortal, penetrating—
I am a part, and cannot cease to be;—
Not death, with all its dissolution,—nor
The grave, where cold corruption does its work
With crumbling, scattering hand,—nor centuries,
Which human thought can neither fix nor number,—
Nor the unhinged, disjointed universe,
Enfolded in the circumambient blaze
Of final conflagration,—shall destroy
What is of God, and indestructible!

Ye distances immeasurably far;
Space unrevealed, thronged with uncounted worlds;—

Skies, whose remote extremes, impassable
Or infinite, baffle the aching thought;—
Stars, systems, suns,—beauty and mystery
Of the deep Heav'ns, whose hieroglyphic signs
We gaze upon, dimly decyphering
The glory and the brightness uncreate
Of Him, who traced them there,—so wonderful!
Rainbows! which, with your arch of loveliness
Resting upon the traces of the storm,
Are unto Nature as a sacrament,—
The outward token and eternal sign
Of a fixed covenant 'twixt earth and Heav'n;—
Still Night! who, like some rapt astrologer,
"Mappest the mazy marches" of the stars;—
Morning! which, like a mother watchingly,
Bendest above the sleeping world, waiting
With tiptoe step,—and gentle, upraised hand
To draw the misty curtain softly back,
Lest the full light should too much dazzle it;—
Twilight! and eve! and shades! whose whisp'r-
ing voice
Lulls the tired day to sleep, and then is still;—
Mountains! whose hushed retirements are the folds
Of the wierd, wand'ring winds;—and ye white
clouds,
Whose fleecy forms hang hovering over them;

Valleys! whose paths are sacred to the foot
Of Solitude, which, like an anchorite,
In silent musing, walks your sombre shades; —
Rivers! whose rapid tribute fills the sea,
In whose depths ye are lost, and traced no more;—
Ocean! whose ebb and flowing are as years,
Whose grey and wrinkled forehead is as time,
And whose vast bosom is eternity;—
Impassive air! who art *invisibly*
The type of Him, who unrevealable,
Yet fills with light, with life, with Deity,
Whatever is, and breathes, or is a part
Of being—vital—intellectual;—
Nature! who art the *visible*, and near,
And omnipresent type and operation
Of Him, who near us, round us, and within,
Creates, renews, produces, and matures,
What is our life, and brief continuance,
And daily being, and innate decay;—
All things created and material,
Deep, or immense, or solemn, or sublime,
Wondrous, or beautiful, above, below,
Or round me,—though a grain, a drop, a span,—
I am beside you;—and, though lost, I view
Entranced your solemn grandeur, and at length
Must sink an atom in comparison

With your millenial epochs six times told,—
Forget me in the heaps of human dust;—
Efface me from remembrance;—let the tomb
In its cold lap fold me in silent death.
My spirit even now, with faith's strong bound,
Leaping the barrier of time and sense,
Sees the bright day, when your sublimities
Shall fold, and fade, and sink in nothingness,—
While I, imperishable and transformed,
Must live an immortality of life,
When time and this material world have passed,
And God—the First and Last—is all in all.

FAITH'S TRIAL AND REWARD.

2 Kings, iv. 8—38.*

Through faith . . . . women received their dead raised to life.—*Heb.* xii. 35.

I.

The Prophet's foot was tired,
Far had he journeyed 'neath the cloudless sun;
And now, at Shunem's gate arrived,
A pious woman there
Pressed him to enter in,—

* The metre, or rather rhythm, here adopted, has been selected as being the nearest in our language to the peculiar style of Hebrew poetry, and consequently the most suitable for the subject.

Unloosed the latchet of his shoe,—
Gave water for his feet,—
And for his parching lips spread cooling fruit.
Oft did the Prophet pass,
And, eager for his stay, the Shunammite
A little chamber had prepared;
She knew he was a man of God;
She knew that Heav'n's behests were on his lips,
And for his weary, way-worn frame
She spread a couch for rest.
And there the Prophet slept.

II.

The man of God was moved,
His bosom beat with thankfulness;—
Unasked the boon was given,—
Unasked his nightly chamber was prepared.
What could repay her love?
What could reveal his secret gratitude?
Nought did she need from king or lord,—
Nought from the captain of the host;—
Content she lived,
With plenty and to spare;
Her cup of blessings overflowing,
Dwelling in peace amid her native scenes,
Happy and rich in her own people's love.

III.

The Prophet prayed,
And prayer prevailed before the throne of God.
The Shunammite was childless;
No little feet made glad her dwelling-place,—
None wore her lineaments,
Or claimed maternal care;
No beaming eye gazed up to her in love;
No infant lisped her name.
Perchance in secret she had wept,—
But now she ceased to weep,—
Hope ceased to picture to her heart a son.
The Prophet prayed:—
The Shunammite became a mother;
She smiled upon her babe.

IV.

Like a fair flower he grew,
Which lifts its golden eye to Heav'n,
And breathes its sweetest fragrance,—
The incense of its praise,—to God;
A flower which soft winds wait upon, and rear
In some cool solitude,
Leaving their freshness on its leaves.
He grew a blooming child;

His dark eye like the mountain-born gazelle's;
His brow with smiles like rippling water bright;
His cheek, just kissed with the warm Eastern sun,
As ruddy summer fruit.
Around his mother's heart
His form,—his gentle loveliness,—entwined,
Close as the clasping tendrils of the vine.

V.

The blue unclouded sky
Spread hot and sultry o'er the parching air;
The sun was like a burning mirror bright,
Casting its fiercest rays
So vertical
That the tall date no shadow cast;
The strongest flow'rs had drooped,
The tamarind hung down its languid leaves;
The feathery cocoa-palm was stirless;
Struck by the radiance of that parching air,
That blue unclouded sky.

VI.

That bright and happy boy,
Unwisting of the fierce and sultry sun,

And the unshaded fields,
Followed the reapers in their sunny toil,
Filling his little lap
With the wild flowers amid the yellow ears;
The hot beam keenly burned—
It struck, with its quick stroke, the tender child.
"My head! my head!" he cried,
And drooped, as a mown flower
Beneath the reaper's hand.
They bore him home;—
Upon his watching mother's lap he pined,
And died that self-same noon.

VII.

She bore him to the Prophet's bed,—
She gazed upon his brow,—
Now it was cold and pale,—
Cold with the touch of death—
Pale with its marble hue;
His full bright eye was curtained up
By its dark fringe.
She named his name;
No smile across his moveless features played;
No answering accent hung upon his lip:
That lip was ashy pale,—

That voice was mute.
All, all, was drear around,
As is the desert's silent waste,
When the worn camel pants and finds no stream,
No clear, cool well;
The mother gazed in sorrow, yet in faith;
She looked to Heav'n,—
She laid the child upon the Prophet's bed.

VIII.

She hastened to the man of God.
What, though it was no Sabbath-day,
No solemn meeting, or new moon;
Faith bore her with expecting heart.
She knew but dimly what she sought,
But darkly what she hoped,
Yet something whispered to her silent heart:—
"It shall be well."
True, the fair child was stiff and cold;
The veil of death enwrapped him;
The blood, which pulsed so warmly o'er his brow,
Had frozen round his heart;
Life's silver cord was loosed;
She knew that he was dead!
Yet a dim presage, undefinable,

Uttered in accents she would fain believe,
"It shall be well!"

IX.

She came to Carmel.—
Lone and abrupt it stood,
Hallowed by solitude,
Yet in its wildness beautiful;—
She felt it was a place for faith, for prayer.
The man of God, with far-off gaze, descried
The hastening form;
He did not know from Heav'n
That death was in her home,
And anguish in her heart;
Nor must Gehazi know her secret grief;
The Prophet's self must hear;—
The Prophet's self console;—
Gehazi quick returns
A messenger of peace,
"With mother, husband, child,
"All, all, is well!"

X.

Why then that hast'ning step?
Why that enquiring, anxious eye?

Why breathless is the Shunammite?
Far she had journeyed,—
Yet few the hours since, with departing gaze,
She looked upon her child.
Fleet is a mother's foot;
Unwearied is her firm fond love;
Time, distance, peril, and self-sacrifice,
In strong endearment's holiest heroism,
She ventures—she endures;—
Fleet is a mother's foot!
Fond is a mother's love!

XI.

She hastened onward to the man of God,
In bitterness of heart she clasped his feet;
She could not look upon his face;—
Deep sorrow weighed her down;
She spake no word!—she wept!—
Her anguish was too deep for words,—
In misery she wept.
She held the Prophet there;
No force could move her,—and no words persuade;
Her soul was vexed within;
And when at length her grief found utterance,
With earnest and imploring voice,
She importuned the man of God.

XII.

The Prophet felt her grief;—
He saw that saddest thoughts her bosom wrung.
As fleetly as the meteor tracks the sky
The quick conjecture passed along his breast,—
The child was dead.
He did not stay to weep,—
He did not stay to ask the cause of weeping,—
He did not stay to soothe the weeper's tears;—
He bade his ministrant
To speed in eager haste;
And slacken not his speed
For greeting voice, or passing salutation;
But fly as on a deed of life and death,
And lay his staff upon the child.

XIII.

The mother's heart was firm,—
She held the Prophet still;
No mission and no speeding ministrant
Could satisfy her soul.
"As thy God lives!" she cried,
"Thee, thee, I will not leave!"
Oh! well she knew the succour was through him,—
That he with God in prayer prevailed,—

That he foretold her son;—
And he, and none but he,
Could intercede to bring him back again.
The mother's heart was firm!
She held the Prophet still!

XIV.

They hastened on beneath the sultry sun,—
Gehazi met them on the way;—
The staff was laid upon the breathless form,—
The child was pale and still;
No voice was heard;—
No sign of life was fluttering at his lips,
Or flushed his cheek.
Like a nipt flower he lay,—
A flower, which Winter's frozen hand has nipt.
Silent they hastened on;—
The Prophet trusting in his God,—
The mother recognizing but in him
The power of Him he served,
Trusted in both.

XV.

The child still lay upon the Prophet's bed,
How mute—how motionless—he lay;

Calm as the stilly eve,
Just as it faints in loveliness,
In the dusk arms of night.
The door was shut;—
The child and death,
The Prophet and his God,
Were there.
The Seer looked up to Heav'n,—
His lips, his heart, his soul, were warm with prayer;—
He stretched himself upon the child—
His mouth upon its breathless mouth he lay,—
His eyes upon its frozen eyes,—
His hands upon its hands!

XVI.

He waited for the will of God;—
He paced the chamber to and fro;
Again he stretched himself upon the child!
Was it the warmth of his own cheek?
Or the returning heat
Of backward-rushing life,
Which faintly glowed upon that pallid face?
He lives! he lives!
A warm pulsation passed across his brow,

Thrilling and tremulous;
A sound of animation then
Fell on the Prophet's ear,—
The shade of death withdrew,—
Life warmed the newly-beating heart.

XVII.

The Prophet gazed upon the child,—
He gazed on his re-kindling cheek,
In fervent gratitude he gazed.
The fringe of the long lashes quivered,
Which erewhile lay like lead
Upon the fixed and glazing eye;
Those lashes were upraised,
And in those dark full eyes was life.
Like a calm lake
(Which all night long beneath the chilling moon
Lies pale in palest light)
Blushes anew with morning's red,
And smiles with its rejoicing, dimpled waves;
So on that chilly brow,
That face so fixed and pale.
That form so cheerless and inanimate,
The flush of life returned,—
The rush of being warmed,—
The child arose and smiled.

XVIII.

Joy was in Shunem's gates;
The house with hallowed songs and praises rung;
The mother's heart was glad!
Oh! great is Israel's God!
Of life and death he holds the mystic keys.
He gives the child of promise;
He gathers what his hand has given.
He hears the child-bereft;
He hears the sighings of a troubled heart;
He hears the voice of prayer;
He hears and heeds!
He heeds his Prophet's faith!
He hears the parents' bitter grief!
He binds again the mother's breaking heart!
Gracious is Israel's God!

POETIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

I.

THE FIRST-BORN SLAIN.

And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle.

And Pharoah rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.—*Exodus*, xii. 29, 30.

The full moon shone bright in the sky,
On the huge piles of Egypt it beamed;
And, shedding its soft-streaming rays from on high,
On palace and temple it gleamed.

All was splendour and silence around;
Not a breeze stirred the reeds of the Nile,
The air was all calm, and the waves were all bound,
As entranced by that moon's hallowed smile.

It was midnight! and dark in the sky
The moon was o'ercast;—and its light
In strange lurid paleness peered ghastly on high,
Like a spectre athwart the dim night.
The stillness of awe, like a spell,
Hung gloomily over the land;
O'er the chambers of princes, o'er dungeons it fell,
With the weight of a death-laden hand.

From the Visiting Angel's dusk wing,
That darkness, that stillness was cast;
It spread over Egypt, and wide did it fling
The slumber of death as it passed.
Not a footstep was heard—not a cry,—
All silent and deep was each breath;
As hushed as the grave did the slumberers lie,
As passed the dark Angel of Death.

That stillness was startled!—the wail
How piercing and wildly it broke!
It rose mid the darkness, it swelled on the gale,
As each child-bereft mother awoke.

Each dwelling was mourning its dead,—
The cry for the first-born was there;—
From the throne of the king, to the dark dungeon bed,
Was the corse,—and the cry of despair!

Each heart sunk within like a stone;
Each eye gazed in wildness and fear;
Loud, loud was the anguish,—deep, deep was the groan,
Through each chamber so ghastly and drear.
Ah! dread was the shaft of the Lord
As it swept over city and plain;—
His Angel unsheathed the invisible sword,—
He smote,—and the sleeper was slain.

Praise! praise!—for the Angel of God
Stayed the blast as o'er Goshen he flew;
O'er the dwellings of Jacob unraised was his rod,
While the first-born of Egypt it slew.
Praise! praise! to Jehovah!—His word
Is mighty to save or destroy;
O'er the proud land of Pharaoh His judgments He poured,—
And led forth His chosen with joy.

II.

THE DEATH OF MOSES ON MOUNT PISGAH.

So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley, in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.—*Deut.* xxxiv. 5—6.

Up the hoar mount the Prophet's foot
Silent in meek submission passed;
All lay around him lone and mute,—
In grandeur desolate and vast.
No pathway marked that barren steep,—
No echo broke its stillness deep,—
But o'er the scene was cast
A voiceless silence, drear and dread,
As some dim valley of the dead.

Unwasted was the Prophet's frame,
Unbent his form, though full of days;
His step as firm,—his strength the same
As when, mid Horeb's dazzling blaze,
In pure, effulgent light he stood,
And talked with God in solitude;
Nor feebler was his gaze,
Nor dimmed with years his eagle eye
Of keen, unwonted brilliancy.

Afar from Pisgah's rugged height,
Enrapt he cast his dying view
To Canaan's happy land of light,
Bathed in its beams of purple hue,
And spread before him, far and near,
In all its sunny radiance clear;
Till bright and brighter grew,
Before, beneath, from side to side,
The flooding glories streaming wide.

He caught fair Gilead's mountain line,—
The far-spread plain,—the distant sea,—
The purpled slopes of Eschol's vine,
And gardens of the olive-tree.
The south before him stretched away,
And Jericho's rich valley lay
Beneath him silently:

And fountains, where the palm-tree waves,
And all the land which Jordan laves.

And here amid this solemn scene,
  Afar from human sight or sound,
With thoughts unearthly and serene;
  Turning his dying gaze around
On that sweet land, which basking lay
In glory's brightest, richest ray
  To its remotest bound;
Here must the Prophet's closing breath
Be breathed to God in tranquil death.

He died apart,—he died alone,—
  No kindred caught his parting word;
No sigh was heaved,—no farewell tone,—
  No lips in sorrowing accents stirred.
No wail was lifted,—and no tear
Dropped on his unseen funeral bier;—
  No loud lament was heard;—
On that still mountain's rugged side,
Alone,—apart, the Prophet died.

No human hand prepared his grave,—
  No balms were brought,—no cerements made;
By God, in some untrodden cave,
  Mid silent vales his form was laid.

No eye his hallowed dust can trace,—
No search can find his resting-place
  In sunlight or in shade;
Angels alone spectators hung,
  And o'er his tomb the requiem sung.

Oh! thus to die in some still spot,
  With waiting Angels hov'ring near,
The world,—the past,—and pain forgot,
  In Faith's wide vision op'ning clear!
Oh! thus to know, that while we sleep,
God's eye above us watch will keep,
  And mark our sepulchre!
And though we sleep apart,—alone,
Our resting-place to Him is known!

III.

ON AN INFANT SMILING IN DEATH.

I SHALL go to Him, but He shall not return to me.—
2 *Sam.* xii. 23.

Is it too fond a thought that that calm smile
Is a faint gleam of Heav'n? to whose bright shore
Blest angels with thy parting spirit soar,
Before it knows—in deed and will—the guile,
And sin, and sorrow of existence, while
Marble stillness spreads thy features o'er,
And thou dost lie like a frost-stricken flower,
Pale as the pale snows round it, which winds pile
As its white sepulchre. Thy pains how few,
Meek child of days! No conflict sore was thine,—
No tossings by the world's rough waves and storms,—
No cares, which make the breaking heart repine,—
No grief, which each soft lineament deforms,—
Lowly, yet lofty, little one, adieu!

IV.

CANST THOU BY SEARCHING FIND OUT GOD?

JOB, XI. 7.

Canst thou by searching find out God?
Go seek Him in the deep eternity;
In heights and depths, which spread immeasurably,
By silent ages trod.

Go seek Him where the flaming stars
Shine upon worlds unseen by this far earth;—
Seek Him where light is yet in embryo birth
Shut in by cloudy bars.

Go seek Him in old ocean's caves,
In its far tracks where wing has never fled;
Where the deep hush of solitude is spread
Like death upon its waves.

Fly on the morning's rosy beams
To the far watch-towers of the rising day,
When the young light breaks through the cloudy grey,
With amethystine streams

Or sink with evening's golden light,
When the last glories leave the western sky,
And the first stars, from their still watch on high,
Beckon the ling'ring night.

Go seek Him when the soft-eyed moon
Sails through the blue of Heav'n in pearly shell;
And silence holds the earth as with a spell,
At midnight's deepest noon.

"There is a way which no bird knoweth,"
High in the unsailed depths of the thin air;
Go seek him in the outspread ether there,
Where his bright glory floweth.

Go to the pathless wilderness,
Seek Him in the wide waste which swells around,
Where Stillness' self speaks, with a solemn sound,
From very loneliness!

Seek Him amid the forest deep,
Far in some dusk and age-outnumbered wood;
Where spirits seem to haunt the solitude,
And viewless forms to sweep.

Go seek Him where the eagles fly,
Where the grey mountains in their grandeur soar,
Hiding amid the clouds their summits hoar,
In misty majesty.

Go where the water's dashing flow
Foams with mad bound adown the precipice;
Hurling its rapids in the wild abyss,
Which hoarsely roars below.

Go where the lightnings cleave the skies,
Where the dread thunders roll their pealing sound,
And clouds, with hollow echo tell around,
That the wild tempests rise.

Go where the gusty hurricane.—
And the young whirlwinds murmur in their wrath,
Restless to rush along the lightning's path,
Lifting their tempest-strain.

Go to the billow-broken shore,
To some remote and scarce-discovered spot,
Where silent "Nature is and man is not,"
To hear the ocean roar.

Go to Creation's farthest bound,—
Seek God in all,—behold Him everywhere,
Below thee and above,—in sea and air,—
Within thee and around.

Yet can thy searching find out God?
Canst thou His power,—His presence understand?
Thou seest the wondrous fabrics of His hand,
Thou hear'st His voice abroad.

But Him we may not,—cannot find;—
Nature,—His type and agent,—we behold;
Its harmony and loveliness unfold
The great Creative Mind.

Yet God Himself we cannot trace;
Too pure for mortal eye to gaze upon,
The sun-eyed seraphs circling round His throne,
Alone can view His face.

V.

PINING FOR GOD.

O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee; my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.—*Psalm* lxxiii. 1.

With panting breast, with weary plume,
The halcyon flits o'er darkling streams,
Nor nestles save where islets bloom,
Mid peaceful waves and sunny beams.
Thus weary o'er life's waters wild,
My spirit flew with restless wings,
Till, to its Saviour reconciled,
It found the rest which Jesus brings.

Like to that frail and tender tree,*
  Which droops and withers when alone,
My soul must ever cling to Thee,
  And make Thy strength, my God, its own.
As hart, by hunters sorely pressed,—
  Or desert camel,—for the spring;
As wild dove for its rocky nest,
  Or captive for his ransoming.

So longs, so pants, my weary breast,—
  So aches and pines my spirit drear,—
But soon they sink to peaceful rest,
  When Thou, my God, when Thou art near;
My drooping soul, my longing heart,
  Can only live when Thou art nigh;
But if Thy presence, Lord, depart,
  This soul must faint—this heart must die.

* The *cacao*, so tender, that a tree, called the "mother of the cacao," is planted beside it to screen it from the sun.

VI.

TEARS OF EARTH.

FROM THE GERMAN OF ALBERTINI.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.—*Ps.* cxxvi. 5.

Go and sow the seed of tears,
  Strew it forth,—the precious sowing,—
There, in Heav'n, thy Lord appears,—
  In His Book, with tear-pearls glowing,—
Record of thy name to keep;
Pious mourner, on and weep!

Ev'ry little tear-drop shed,
  In thy crown will shine resplendent,
As, on that bright day, thy head
  Jesus crowns with rays transcendant;
When a priest to God you stand,
High mid glory's shining band.

All the sighs of grief and care,
  Breaking *now* with sore oppression,
Rise on high, and treasured there,
  Safely bide in Christ's possession;
Once again to fill thy breast
  In eternal, saintly rest.

See the seeds of mourning rise,
  Strong and green, with full ears bending,
Oh! how sweet the labour-prize
  Waiting us when life is ending.
White the harvest-floor appears,
Pays it not our toils and tears!

Oh! what bliss shall crown that day,
  When the yellow sheaves are waving,
And all sorrow passed away;—
  Glory, then, thy path-way paving,
Up thou soarest, up on high,
Crowned with wreath of victory.

"Lord, I bring myself and these,—
  These, the children, Thou hast given!"
Jesus then thy soul shall ease—
  "Faithful servant, enter Heav'n;
Glory's palm and crown be thine,
Bright with Me for ever shine!"

VII.

THE POWER AND PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GELLERT.

O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; Thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?—*Ps.* cxxxix.

My song is God,—
He is the Lord Almighty;
His name is holy, and His works are mighty,
And the wide Heav'ns are His abode.

He speaks His will,
And bright worlds have their being;
At his rebuke, again to nothing fleeing,
Those worlds His high behests fulfil.

His robe is light;
Best is the course which He directeth;
He reigns as God,—and His firm throne erecteth
In truth, and equity, and right.

Of riches full,
In happiness transcending,
Without beginning God,—God without ending;
Lord of all worlds,—and wonderful.

All things that be
In Heav'n, or earth, or ocean,
To Him are known; their evéry act and motion
His eye reviews unceasingly.

His presence near
In safety keeps me dwelling;
Each secret thought within my bosom swelling
To Him is all revealed and clear.

Present all-where,
He marks my ev'ry going;
Whether to Heav'n,—or where the sea is flowing,
I flee,—yet still His eye is there.

He knows my prayer,
And ev'ry wish I ponder;
He knows what good I do, and when I wander,
And speeds to lend a listening ear.

He marked my lot,
Meting each gift and treasure;
And noted in His book how long my measure
Of years,—when yet my birth was not.

Nothing is mine,
All, all, from Him is flowing;—
My heart, my soul, my lips, are ever glowing
To swell with praise His name divine.

Who understands,
O Lord, Thy wise decreeing?
Each mote, which, through Thy wisdom, has its being,
Announces its Creator's hand.

Each reed so frail
Thy wondrous skill forth-telleth;
Air, sea, and valleys, ev'ry hill which swelleth
In hymns of praise Thy wisdom hail.

Wat'ring the land,
Thou mak'st the mead to flourish ;
And corn, and wine, and oil, our hearts to nourish,
Shed'st in our lap with plenteous hand.

No sparrow falls,
But as Thy will ordaineth,—
Thy hand my life, my lot, my soul, sustaineth,
Oh ! this my holiest trust recalls.

Is God my shield?
Has God my succour taken?
What fear I then, though Heav'n and earth be shaken,
Or Hell's dark gates their threat'nings wield!

VIII.

THE MESSENGER OF PEACE.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation.—*Is.* lii. 7.

Go where duty calls thee!—
To the sick and dying;
Where the sufferer, racked with pain,
Faint and weak is lying.
Go! though fever's heavy breath,
Round the couch is creeping;
Go! though, at the sight of death,
Gathered friends are weeping.
Go! nor fear Infection's power,
Unseen arrows darting;
Go! nor dread the trying hour,
When the soul is parting.

He, the Lord of death and life,
He is there beside thee,
Through the snare and through the strife,
Safe His arm will guide thee.
Go where duty calls thee!

Go! where duty calls thee!—
To the broken hearted,
Where, from the afflicted breast,
Hope has long departed;
Go! and shrink not from the sigh
The sad bosom rending;
Turn not from the weeping eye
To the dark earth bending;
Go! though piteous plaints you hear,
Go! and whisper gladness;
Wipe the mourner's bitter tear,
Soothe the soul of sadness;—
He, who once our sorrows bore,—
He, who felt our anguish,—
Bids thee balm of healing pour,—
Bids thee not to languish;
Go! where duty calls thee!

Go! where duty calls thee!—
To the old and weary,

Wasted, world-worn, full of years,
Pining, sad, and dreary.
Go! and raise the silvered head
On the lone breast drooping;
Lift the frame so chill and dead
To the cold earth stooping;—
Go! nor pass forsaken age,
Cheerless and unfriended,
Smooth its rugged pilgrimage,
Ere its course be ended;
He, who walked this wilderness,
Breathing consolation,
Let the agéd "part in peace,
Seeing His salvation."
Go! where duty calls thee!

Go! where duty calls thee!—
To the place of weeping,
To the calm and quiet spot
Where the dead are sleeping;
Go! where troubles come no more,
Never more molesting;
Where the toil of life is o'er,
And the weary resting;
Go! and, strewing dust to dust
Over the departed,

Breathe the prayer of hope and trust
To the broken hearted.
Jesus guards the hallowed rest,
Where His Saints are sleeping,
He, their souls redeemed and blest,
In His arms, is keeping.
Go! where duty calls thee!

Go! where duty calls thee!—
Raise the prayer to Heav'n;
To the broken, contrite heart
Breathe of sins forgiven.
Prostrate at the Father's throne,
Humbly there adore Him,—
Lift the supplicating tone,—
Meekly bend before Him.
Lose all worldly thought and sense
In the deep devotion;
Offer heart and soul intense,
With a rapt emotion.
He,—the Lofty One,—descends
On the meek and lowly;
Joy, and trust, and peace, He sends,
And fervour, high and holy.
Go! where duty calls thee!

Go! where duty calls thee!—
Lift the proclamation;
Stand as herald of thy God,
Heralding salvation.
Scatter wide the seed of life,
Lift thy voice and fear not;
Heed not scorn,—and heed not strife,—
Speak though many hear not.
Tidings, joyful tidings, sound
To the heart lamenting;
Raise the spirit,—conscience-bound,—
Free the soul repenting.
Angels wait on hovering wing;—
Holy, heavenly fire
See from God's deep love they bring
Courage to inspire.
Go! where duty calls thee!

IX.

THE EVENING.

The day goeth away, the shadows of the evening are stretched out.—*Jer.* vi. 4.

The day-light dies!—the evening shades are
spreading,
Low 'neath the hill has sunk the setting sun,
The day-light's work is done,
And gathering night o'er all its gloom is shedding;
The pilgrim's way-worn footsteps cease to roam;
The weary hastens home!

The ev'ning thickens, and its shades grow deeper;
The aching head, the torn and bleeding breast,
In sweet oblivion rest,—
And tranquil slumber curtains up the sleeper,
The stars are in the Heav'ns gleaming bright,
And the moon's hallowed light.

Life's narrowing day wears on ;—the eve is nearing,
Soon will the day-spent, westering sun go down;
And the white wintry crown
Of bent old age upon our brows appearing,
Tell that the earth is heark'ning out to hear
The slow-approaching bier.

Then shall the weary rest, and toil be ended,—
The troubled heart and wounded breast be still
From pain and earthly ill,—
And life, with all its sorrows be suspended ;
But oh ! what ray can cheer that gath'ring night?
Faith's Heaven-kindled light.

X.

LORD, IT IS GOOD TO BE HERE.

MATT. XVII. 4.

E. The Mountain Pass.

Lord, it is good to be here!
Here where the wild crags soar,
And their summits are lost on high!
And the still lake slumbers beneath the sky,
Which watches it evermore.
Here, where the tall cliffs, riven apart,
Stand as they ever have stood,
And the eloquent stillness speaks to the heart,
In this hallowed solitude.
Lord, it is good to be here!

II. The House of God.

Lord, it is good to be here!
Here, where thine honour dwells;
And apart from the world of care,
Calmed with the sense and spirit of prayer,
The breast in devotion swells;
Here, where to minds, which are meek and low,
The message is brought from above,—
And the minist'ring angels pass to and fro,
On their missions of peace and love.
Lord, it is good to be here!

III. Self-Communion and Communion with God.

Lord, it is good to be here!
Here, where no earthly thing
Breaks upon musings hushed and deep,—
But the calm thoughts are still as in calmest sleep,
With heavenly communings;
Here, where the past-gazing spirit sees
The paths which it has trod;
And, uplifting the veil of its mysteries,
Reveals them to its God.
Lord, it is good to be here!

IV. The Bed of Chastening.

Lord, it is good to be here!
Here, on the chastening bed;—
Where the world, and its jarring noise,
Can entice no more;—but its hopes and joys
From the trying scene have fled.
Here, in this lonely Peniel*—
A still and awful place—
Where the spirit in solemn talk must dwell
With its chastener face to face.
Lord, it is good to be here!

V. The Church-Yard.

Lord, it is good to be here!
Here, where the dead are at rest;
And the stone and the broken urn
Tell that dust unto dust must return,
And mingle in earth's cold breast.
Here, where the heart of sorrow is still,
And grief has ceased to pain;
And the sleepers their quiet sleep fulfil,
Till summoned to wake again.
Lord, it is good to be here!

* And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face.—*Gen.* xxxii. 30.

VII. The Eternal Home.

Lord, it is good to be here!
Here in eternal day;
Now we are free from earthly strife,
And Mortality's swallowed up of life,
And the world has passed away!
Here the rapt Saints in glory gaze,
And know as they are known;
And lift the untiring song of praise
Around the eternal throne.
Lord, it is good to be here!

XI.

THE TOMB OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

And behold there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and, for fear of him, the keepers did shake and became as dead men.—*Matt.* xxviii. 2, 3, 4.

'Twas night!— still night!
A solemn silence hung upon the scene;—
The keen, bright stars shone with unclouded light,
Calm and serene.

Hushed was the tomb!
The heavy stone before its entrance lay!
No light broke in upon its silent gloom,—
No starry ray.

The moonlight beamed,
It hung above that garden, soft and clear,—
Around the watchful guard its radiance gleamed
From helm and spear.

The tomb was sealed,
The watch patrolled before its entrance lone;
The bright night every passing step revealed,—
None neared the stone.

Midnight had passed;
The stars their lustrous shining had decreased;
And Day-break's earliest light was hast'ning fast,
In the pale east.

The morning-star,
Last in the silent Heav'n, withdrew its ray,
And the white dawn spreading its spectre light,
Foretold the day.

An earthquake's shock
Just at the break of morning shook the ground;
And echoed from that rent and trembling rock,
With startling sound.

The guards, amazed,
Fell to the earth in wonder and affright;
And round the astonished spot in glory blazed
A sudden light.

An angel there
Descended from the tranquil sky;
The glory of his presence filled the air
All-radiantly.

He rolled away
From the still sepulchre the massy stone,
And,—watching silent till the risen day,—
He sat thereon.

His garments white
Shone like the snow in its unsullied sheen;
His face was,—like the lightning's gleaming light,—
Dazzlingly seen.

All, all around
Was silence and suspense, and list'ning dread;
The stirless watch lay prostrate on the ground,
Hushed as the dead.

At break of day,
The Saviour burst that cavern's stillness deep;
Rising in conquest from Death's shattered sway
As from a sleep.

He rose in power,
In all the strength of God-head shining bright;
Fresh as that hallowed morning's dewy hour,
Pure as its light.

He rose as God,
Rose as a mighty victor strong to save;
Breaking Death's silent chain and unseen rod
There in the grave.

He rose on high,
(While angels hung around on soaring wing,)
Wresting from the dark grave its victory,
From Death its sting.

XII.

CHRIST THE CONSOLER.

THE spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor: He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.—*Luke*, iv. 18.

I.

LURED by the love of everlasting truth,
I hung above the Word of God!
I longed to search its depths,
I longed to know its blessedness,—
I thirsted to drink in its inspiration;
O God! unseal my heart!
O God! unseal Thy Word!
My heart was opened to its mysteries,
I read,—I felt,—I pondered,—I believed.
The present faded from my eyes;—
The past spread out before me;—

Hallowed imagination called me back
To other days,—
To other scenes;
I saw,—I listened,—I adored!

II.

It was a mountain solitude!
A listening crowd was there,—
The poor, the mourners, the despised of men;—
And in the midst there sat a form of light,
How calm His hallowed brow!
What love! what tenderness was there!
What glory beamed around His radiant head!
Meeker than mortal man,
A majesty proclaimed Him more than man!
His look was love,—
His heart was gushing with full sympathy
For those who anxious gazed,
And eager stretched the ear
To catch His words, which, like the dew of Heav'n,
In softest mercy fell.

III.

He preached glad tidings to the poor,—
He blessed the poor in spirit,—

He poured his blessing on the heart that mourned,
The meek He gifted with His love.
To those, who hungered for the bread of life,—
To those, who thirsted for the healing streams,—
He told the fulness of the gifts of God.
He blessed the pure in heart,—
The peace-makers,—
Those persecuted by the unjust world,—
The righteous,—the reviled.
The Prophet's declaration was fulfilled!
A high, and Holy One was there,
Preaching glad tidings to the poor.

IV.

I looked again!
The morning's sun was still on Naïn's gates,
A winding funeral train
Moved sadly on and slow.
The youth how pale he lay!
How marble white his chill, wan cheek!
His lips how motionless! how mute!
His eyes how fixed and meaningless!—
That deep, sad wail
How bitterly it wrings the widow's heart,—
The doubly widowed now,—the child-bereft!

Hallowed imagination called me back
To other days,—
To other scenes;
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His eyes how fixed and meaningless!—
That deep, sad wail
How bitterly it wrings the widow's heart,—
The doubly widowed now,—the child-bereft!

Oh! pang of parting! broken love!
Grief told by tears,
Tears all too silent, and impassionate
Grief's anguish to reveal.

V.

But *He* is there,
The mild, the merciful!
He sees, and not in vain, that mother's pang,—
He hears, and not in vain, the inmost sob.
The widow's husband, and the orphan's God,
Is He!
The bier is still,—obedient at his word;—
The unembodied soul
Hung listening for His will!—
The heart-spring moves once more;
The thrill of life, like light,
Darts through the stirless frame;
The ashy lip quivers with the red tide;—
The blush, like morning ray, dawns on the cheek;
The chill brow warms with animation,
The wondering eyes, loosed from Death's heavy band,
Look up, and faintly smile;—
Look upon Him,—the eternal light,—

Look upon her, who, awe-struck, speaketh not!
I saw in that irradiate brow,—
I heard in those soft words—"Weep not!"—
The Sëer's prophecy fulfilled:—
"The broken heart He comes to heal."

VI.

A change passed over me,—
I stood in thought in breeze-swept Gádara;
One wild and dæmon-struck was there!—
His dwelling was the tombs;—
No garment wrapped him round;—
His eye rolled franticly;
His strong limbs quivered in convulsive throes;
His face was haggard fierce!
He rolled amid the dust,
And rent his flesh and tore his hair!
Hoarse sounds burst from him, and he spoke:
"Torment me not,
Jesus, Thou Son of God, Most High!"
A gentle voice rebuked the fiend;
The devils trembled at the voice of God;
They feared,—and fled!
Reason returned;—
The pale and trembling man adored;

He heard God's voice in that rebuking tone,—
He heard,—and he believed!—
And lowly there at the Redeemer's feet,
Clothed, and with quiet mind,
He caught the hallowed accents of those lips,
Which preached deliverance to the bound!

VII.

It was the Jewish Sabbath day;
The Temple on bold Zion's height
Shone with its dazzling sheen;
The haughty Pharisee, as he swept by,
Beheld it with a superstitious pride;—
It was the city's bulwark, and its boast,—
So lovely and so gloriously it stood!
Yet one there was who saw it not,
Night, night, was on his eyes;—
No ray could reach them,
Nor that Temple's sheen.
The Lord of light beheld and pitied him.
All was suspense!
The Saviour touched his eyes,—
His finger,—for a sign,—anointed them:—
And, to essay his faith,
He bade the blind wash in Siloam's pool.

He went,—he washed,—he saw,—
Returned,—and worshipped.
He looked upon the light of Heav'n,—
He looked on Heaven's uncreated light,
Who, veiled in human form,
Gave sight unto the blind.

VIII.

A broken heart is God's best sacrifice!
Its sighs are heard above the seraphs' harps!
Its tears are kept in Heav'n!
Christ knows the breaking heart,
Christ sees the bursting tear,
He stills the troubled sigh!
A penitent, whose soul was full of love,
Crept near Him as He sat at meat;—
She clasped His sacred feet,—
With warm and bursting tears
She bathed them in a stream of penitence,—
And, letting fall her disentangled hair,
Which hung, like a dark veil, adown her cheeks,
Hiding the blush of guilt and shame,—
She wiped those tears away;
And, with a precious box of nard,—
Not to her Lord so precious as those tears,—

Those feet thus bathed, thus unbathed she anointed,
And kissed them oft and oft with burning lips.
The Saviour looked with glance compassionate,
And, bidding her depart in peace,
Bound up the bruised and contrite heart.

IX.

How lovely are their feet,
Who bring glad tidings of good things,
Who comfort those who mourn!
Woe-weary is the heavy heart!
Crushing the load it bears!
It droops,—it breaks,—it cannot carry it!
Where shall the weary heart find rest?
Oh! pressing is the weight of human care;—
Strained is the eye that weeps;—
Wrinkled the brow where grief has set its seal.
Bitter is disappointed hope!
The widowed bosom wrenched from love,—
Dissevered in its nearest ties by death!
Ah! what is man's inheritance?
A wilderness of thorns;—a vale of mists;—
Cursed is his estate;—
His bread the bread of bitterness,
His cup of tears,—

Where shall the heavy heart find rest?
I hear, I hear, Heav'n's voice of love,
It falls, like dew, from the Redeemer's lips,—
Like dew upon the weary, withered heart,—
Like dew upon life's wilderness,—
Like dew on the seared brow:—
"Come unto me, ye heavy-laden, come,
Ye labour-wearied come!
Lean on this arm of power,—
This breast of love,—
And rest!
For easy is My yoke,—My burden light!"

XIV.

THE WATERS TROUBLED.

Now, there is at Jerusalem, by the sheep-market, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, and withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first, after the troubling of the waters, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.—*John*, v. 4.

Of old, beside Bethesda's pool,
The sick and feeble lay,—
Waiting around its porches cool,
For many a weary day.

But cureless did those waters lie
Through shade or summer's beam,
Until an angel hovered nigh,
And stirred the quiet stream.

Man's life is but the counterpart
Of that Bethesda tide,—
Around it must the wounded heart
The pining breast abide.

But, ah! no ease the mourner proves
To cheer the dreary hour,
Till o'er its waves affliction moves,—
A Heav'n-sent angel power.

Yes! ruffled must its waters be
With sorrow's dark'ning wings,—
This, with its chastening property,
Corrects the secret springs.

Does care perplex? Is anguish near?
And none thy grief to feel?
Look up, my soul, with faith sincere,
To Him whose voice can heal.

XV.

OH! SAY NOT THAT WE DIE.

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.—*John*, xi. 25, 26.

Oh! say not that we die!
Say not that we, whose Heav'n-born souls inherit
Their life from Life can ever pass away;
That we, whose source is the Eternal Spirit,
Can yield what is from God to slow decay.

Say, say is it to die—
To give this weary body unto sleeping?
To lay down sorrow's crushing, cumbrous load?
To rest where we can hear no sounds of weeping,—
Far, far away from life's tear-tracen road?

Oh! say is it to die—
To burst from out this tottering mortal dwelling,
A spirit unembodied, unconfined?
To view the wide expanse of glory swelling,
And earth and all its anguish left behind?

Oh! say is it to die—
To pass from life's rough channel to the ocean?
To enter on the solemn after-life!
To feel our being pass with spirit's motion
Free from the conflict and the mortal strife?

Say, say, is it to die—
To cease to drink the cup of earthly sorrow?
To cease to tread the narrow vale of tears?
To waken to that day that knows no morrow,—
Where time is not—nor flowing, ebbing years!

Oh! say is it to die—
When angels o'er the parting spirit linger
Just as it passes to its God on high;
And point, with beaming smile and beckoning finger,
To far-off mansions in the happy sky?

Say, say, is it to die—
To lay aside a body daily wasting,
With toil outworn, with weight of care oppprest?
And spring away,—with eager faith, foretasting
The peace, the quiet of the promised rest?

Oh! say is it to die—
To wear the Saviour's radiant form of brightness?
To see Him as He is, with glory crowned?
To stand, in robes of pure, unsullied whiteness,
Joining the songs of happy Saints around?

Oh! this is not to die—
To leave a world of changes, and of seeming,
Where, amid fleeting phantasies, we dwell,—
And wing away, as from a state of dreaming,
To waking, and to bliss unchangeable.

Oh! this is not to die—
Is it not rather into life expanding,—
Breaking the trial-state to live indeed!
Safe from the tempest in the haven landing,—
From storms, from toils, from rocking billows freed.

No! no! we cannot die!
In Death's unrobing room, we strip from round us
The garments of mortality and earth;
And, breaking from the embryo state which bound us,
Our day of dying is our day of birth!

And yet to earth we die,—
Born to new life with all its weight of blessing,—
Born to a world where ills can never press;—
Exalted, pure,—angelic joys possessing,—
If this be death,—then death is happiness!

XVI.

JESUS WEPT.

John, xi. 35.

Yes! Jesus wept!—and why did tears
That holy cheek bedew?
No human doubts,—no mortal fears
The sacred Jesus knew.

Yet Jesus wept!—He wept to see
The withering work begun;
And cold obstruction silently
Fold a belovéd One.

He wept to see the dark, deep power,—
The death-doom curse of sin,—
Blighting, like some untimely flow'r,
Man's fragile life within.

He wept to see the spoil of death,—
The features pale and cold;—
No pulse, no stir, no look, no breath,
No trace of living mould.

He wept to see, with grief-wrung breast,
The sisters standing near;
The severed heart with pangs opprest,
The silent, anguisht tear.

He wept to see that "earth to earth"
Man's epitaph must be,—
Man framed by Him of heavenly birth,
For immortality.

Yet though He wept beside the grave,
This truth has Jesus proved,
From Death's dark breast His arm can save,
And ransom His beloved.

Ah! mourner, lift the weeping eye,—
This blessedness believe;—
"Who *live* in Him shall never *die*,
Who *die* in Him shall *live*."

XVII.

I THIRST.

JOHN, xix. 28.

TRANSLATED FROM CASIMIR.

"I thirst!" O meek Redeemer, Thou didst cry;—
No wine to stay Thee can our hands afford.
"I thirst!" ah! me, the cup is raised on high,
Gall mixed with vinegar, my dying Lord.
Drink, drink, dear Saviour, drain the bitter draught;
For me,—for man's salvation,—it is quaffed.

XVIII.

THE CHRISTIAN'S REST AND RESURRECTION.

FROM THE GERMAN OF KLOPSTOCK.

THEM who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him.—
1 *Thess.* iv. 14.

RISE again, yes, rise again thou must,
After short rest, my dust;
Through death's dark portal,
Rising to life immortal.
Hallelujah!

Sown am I in earth again to bloom;
The harvest Lord will come,
And gather near Him
His sheaves,—all those who fear Him!
Hallelujah!

Day of sweet tears,—day of most just award,—
Day of my God and Lord,—
When in Death's keeping,
The time is past for sleeping,
Thou wilt wake me!

All then will seem as to a dreamer's eyes,—
With Jesus we shall rise,
To share His blessing;—
The pilgrim's sore distressing
Will then be o'er.

Then shall the Lord lead to His throne of bliss.
Them, who, on earth, were His,—
Within His dwelling
His holy praise forth-telling.
Hallelujah!

SONNETARY SKETCHES FROM TRAVEL.

I.

NIGHT ON THE RHINE AT MANNHEIM.

All things are calm, and fair; and passive earth
Looks as if lulled upon an angel's lap
Into a breathless, dewy sleep: so still,
That we can only say of things, they be!
The lakelet now, no longer vexed with gusts,
Replaces on her breast the pictured moon,
Pearled round with stars. Sweet imaged scene of time
To come, perchance, when this vain life o'erspent,
Earth may some purer beings' presence bear.—*Bailey.*

The sky with thin and fleecy clouds is spread,
And from their silvered loop-holes the mild light
Of the young maiden moon is peering bright,
As she glides forth, with soft and timid tread,
To smile upon thy waves, O Rhine. O'erhead,

Silent and slumberous the still-paced night,
With carcanet of stars profusely dight,
Listens to catch the scarce-heard serenade
Of the last breeze, ere it sinks down to rest.
How calm the air, the earth, the moon-bright stream!
How full of peace is Nature's loveliness!
Oh! that such pure, still, holy calm would bless
The night within, lulling Life's feverish dream,—
Filling with Heav'n's own light this clouded breast!

II.

PASS OF THE BRENNER, AND VALLEY OF THE EISACK, TYROL.

A SPIRIT, stronger than the sword,
And loftier than despair,
Through all the heroic region poured,
Breathes in the generous air.—*Hemans.*

SCENES of the bold defile and waterfall,
Whose every path is sacred by the tread
Of struggling Liberty,—which, unbought, shed
Its purest blood throughout you;—ye recall
Visions, which may not pass away,—but fall
Like gleams of hero-days around us spread,—
Hofer, and his brave mountaineers, who bled
For their dear fatherland,—and at the call
Of Freedom left their hearths and pleasant dales,
Making each pass a new Thermopylæ.
Passing between the porphyry crags,—and vales
Shut in by solemn gloom,—I catch afar
Adige, thy valley, smiling radiantly,
As through Invasion's night, Hope's beaming star.

III.

THE VALLEY OF THE ADIGE ABOUT SALURNO,

WHERE IT MEETS WITH THE STREAM AND VALLEY OF THE NON.

Rapido fiume, che d' alpestra vena,
Impetuosamente a noi discendi,
E quella terra sovra ogn' altra amena
Per mezzo, a guisa di Meandro, fendi.—*Berni.*

How sweet is all around thee, thou bright stream,
How cloudless is thy sky,—how calm thy air,—
Breathing of that soft land, whose atmosphere
Is sunshine; faint with heat the fig-trees seem
To languish in the parching noon-day beam;
Yet blithely falls upon the passing ear,
From the dark mulberry, the trilling clear
Of the unseen cicada; and in dream
Of soft delight the stirless valley lies,

Watched in its slumber, by thy ruined height,
Salurno; now,—reflecting the clear skies,—
I trace the sparkling Non; Oh! thus in light,
To mingle with my being's mysteries
The gleams of Heaven,—as do those waters bright!

IV.

VAL SUGANA.

It was now I beheld groves of olives, and vines clustering the summits of the tallest elms; pomegranates in every garden, and vases of citron and orange before almost every door. The softness and transparency of the air soon told me I was arrived in happier climates; and I felt sensations of joy and novelty running through my veins, upon beholding this smiling land of groves and verdure stretched out before me.—*Beckford.*

As some fair porch of rich magnificence,
Which leads into a temple opening bright,—
So art thou, lovely vale;—I catch the sight
Of blue, Italian skies of hue intense,
Arched over thee,—and the enchanted sense
Breathes the transparent air, and luscious light
Of that soft clime, which steals the spirit hence,
Entrancing it in visions of delight:—

Source of the infant Brenta, which through thee
Winds on its silvery course by slope and hill,
Where the pomegranate and the olive-tree,
And festooned vines glow in the summer beams,—
Thy vistas are before me, stretching still,
Like Eden lawns, seen amid happy dreams.

V.

ITALY.

Formosissima donna, Io chiedo al cielo
E al mondo; dite, dite,
Chi la ridusse a tale? . . . . . .
Che sparte le chiome e senza velo
Siede in terra negletta, e sconsolata,
Nascondendo la faccia
Tra le ginocchia,—e piange—*Giac. Leopardi.*

Like a fair virgin, on whose waning brow
The seal of faint decay is gently set,—
Yet lovely in decline;—her pale cheek wet
With tears of soft remembrance rising now
To link the past and present;—such art thou,
Sweet Italy; delight and beauty yet
Linger around thee, bidding us forget
That wrongs and ills have made thee feebly bow

I cannot tear me from thy loveliness,—
Thy beauty, like a feeling, fills my heart,
And makes it love thee more in thy distress;
Ah! that the loveliest must the first decay!
That forms the sweetest soonest must depart,—
Leaving but dreams of brightness passed away!

VI.

PADUA.

Padua has contracted from its long, low porticoes, and its gloomy churches, a grave old vacancy of aspect.—*Forsyth.*

Time-honoured city, I could linger here,
Here mid thy learned haunts and classic ground.
And, looking on thy cloistered walks around,
Could deem I saw past ages re-appear.
I pass through streets and scarcely hear a sound;
All seems as in some spell of magic* bound,
A silence calm and sweet,—not dull and drear.
Thy antique tombs,† thy palaces,‡ and halls,—

* In the middle ages Padua was considered the school of necromancy.

† Amongst others, one fabled to be the tomb of Antenor.

‡ The *Palazzo della Ragione* is a quaint building, with many as quaint a legend connected with it.

Thy mosque-like church,* and thy arena† old,
Beckon us on through distant intervals,
To dreams and thoughts, and scenes of other days;
Thee, as a mediæval relic, we behold,
Filled with hushed reveries and silent praise.

* The Church of Sant' Antonio has seven domes, and three minaret spires.

† What is shown as the *arena* was undoubtedly a Roman amphitheatre; the walls are perfect.

VII.

VENICE.

——————————— Memory
Lies heavy on the atmosphere around;
There is the sea,—but where now are the ships,
That bore the will of Venice round the world?
Where are the sails that brought home victory
And wealth from other nations? No glad prows
Break up the waters into sparkling foam.—*L. E. Landon.*

The tide has gone, and left thee on the strand
Like some proud galleon rich in its decay;—
Venice, departed is the conquest-day,
Which spread thy fame through many a wond'ring land.
The Mole, St. Mark's, thy doge's palace stand,—
But thy high merchant-princes where are they?
Where the dread dukes who made the isles obey,

And scattered largesse with a lavish hand?
Faded thy glories,—and thy sun o'ercast,—
Thy mart deserted,—and thy palaces
The tarnished mock of splendour which has passed;—
Filled with gone days, and gazing *thus* on *thee*,
Say! can we taunt thee *more*, or love thee *less*,
Because thy lot,—like ours,—is mutability!

VIII

VERONA.

Ocelle mundi, sidus Itali cœli,
Flos urbium, flos, corniculumque amœnum
Quot sunt, eruntve, quot fuere Verona.—*Evelyn.*

Classic Verona, what enchanting power
Has made thy name a spell,—a magic word,—
A pleasing incantation,—which, when heard,
Calls up the scenes of many a by-gone hour?
Is it that here we view, as thy rich dower,
The soft, blue hills, and groves of cypress, stirred
By the faint wind,—and many an antique tower,—
And vales of beauty, where the untiring bird
Sings to thy river,* as it murmurs by?
Or is it that our fancy lingers here,
Seeking, amid romantic scenery,
The tomb of Juliet, hallowed by fond love?
Sweet spot, to sight, to thought, to fancy dear,
Thy name is in my heart, bright as thy skies above.

* The Adige.

IX.

LAGO DI GARDA.

PENINSULARUM Sirmio, insularumque
Ocelle, quascunque in liquentibus stagnis
Marique vasto fert uterque Neptunus:
Quam te libenter quamque lætus inviso.—*Cat.* 32.

GARDA, the noon-day sun from the bright sky
Gleams on thy waters, gilding with its rays
Thy sparkling mirror, and thy glittering bays,
Which spread, like plated gold, so stilly lie
Thy waters;—not a breeze is passing by,
Nor o'er thy face one sportive ripple plays.
The very air is sunshine,—and one blaze
Of noontide glory rests uncloudedly
On wave and stirless wood, and basking plain.
Far distant, opening on the dazzled sight,
I catch the point of Sirmio, and the chain
Of mountains shaded with that deep, dark blue,
Which tints the landscape in this land of light,—
Tints such as Titian's pencil richly drew.

X.

MILAN CATHEDRAL, FROM THE OCTAGON GALLERY.

But fancy, with the speed of fire,
Passes to Milan's loftiest spire,
And there alights 'mid that aerial host
Of figures human and divine,
White as the snows of Appennine
Indúrated by frost.—*Wordsworth.*

Is it the airy structure of a dream,
Or an enchanted garden turned to stone,
With marble palm-trees, fruit, and cypress cone,
Which spreads beneath and round me? What a stream
Of dazzling whiteness, glittering in the beam
Of the clear sky, brightly reflects upon
Finial, and niche, and flying buttress thrown
So light and airily, that one could deem

They were of frost-work, or the stalactites
Of some old caves fantastic tracery :—
What calm, pure thoughts this sacred pile invites,—
Worship steals on us ;—and the heart expands
Into a temple filled, O God, with Thee,—
A saintly spirit-shrine, not made with hands!

XI.

THE LAKE OF COMO.

——————— The morning air
Plays on my cheek how gently, flinging round
A silvery gleam: and now the purple mists
Rise like a curtain; now the sun looks out,
Filling, o'erflowing with his glorious light
This noble amphitheatre of hills;
And now appear, as on a phosphor-sea,
Numberless barks.—*Rogers.*

Fair mirror, where the blue Italian sky,
Reflects in beauty its unclouded face,—
Oh! with what warm emotions do I trace
The sunny spots which on thy margin lie;
Here snow-white villas meet the wandering eye,—
Their trailing vines their tendrils interlace
Down to thy very lip;—here at its base

Some wood-crowned rock slopes out luxuriantly,
Sweet reflex of the skies, I could forget
On thee, that earth had aught of sin and tears,—
Or that its path with many a thorn is set.
Calm as the soft wind o'er thee is my breast,—
Unswayed, unruffled,—or with joy or fears,—
Too calm for joy,—for fears too much at rest!

XII.

MONTE SALVADOR.

Splendid fertility, rich woods and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view, contrasted with sea-like extent of plain, fading into the sky; and this again with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps, unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than, perhaps, any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands.—*Wordsworth.*

The rough ascent is passed,—and from thy height,
Lone Salvador, I gaze upon a scene
Of unconceived magnificence;—between
Op'nings in yon descent, I catch the light
Of sparkling waves below, which ripple bright,
And softly kiss the shore:—woods richly green,
And fertile plains, and sunny lakes are seen
Spreading in distant beauty;—and the sight

Catches afar Mont Rosa's peak of snow,—
And, resting like bright clouds upon the sky,
The white chain of the Alps, which boldly throw
Their forms on the horizon ;—all around
Is grandeur, stillness, and sublimity,—
The Alps,—the lakes,—the plains,—the Heav'n profound!

XIII.

MONTE SALVADOR.

Cliffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times,
Let all remind the soul of Heaven;
Our slack devotion needs them all;
And Faith,—so oft of sense the thrall,
While she, by aid of Nature, climbs,—
May hope to be forgiven.—*Wordsworth.*

Oh! from such Pisgah-height of faith to view
The glorious future spreading far away,
Op'ning its lovely vistas, where the ray
Of Heav'n falls peacefully,—and the rich hue
Of Paradise tints with celestial blue;
Scenes which repose in everlasting day,—
And waving trees, whose beauties ne'er decay,
But glow with bright'ning colours ever new,—

On these to gaze,—and, with astonished sight,
Catch the far line of the eternal hills,
Lit with immortal radiance,—and bright
Rivers of life, and waters, at whose taste
The soul shall lose its sense of earthly ills,
And ev'ry pang it knew, through life's bewildered waste.

XIV.

LAKE OF LUCERNE.

Yes! I have loved thy wild abode,
  Unknown, unploughed, untrodden, shore;
Where scarce the woodman finds a road,
  And scarce the fisher plies an oar:
  For man's neglect I love thee more;
That art nor avarice intrude
  To tame thy torrent's thunder-shock,
  Or prune thy vintage of the rock,
Magnificently rude.—*Campbell.*

Ruffled with winds thy waves are rolling free,
  Spurning the rocks, which frown along thy shores,
  Lake of Four Cantons;—how the rapt soul soars
Looking upon thee! who unmoved can see
Thy hallowed scenes,—or not in fancy flee
  Back to far times, which the free heart adores?
  Oh! what a flood of sacred feeling pours
Itself throughout me, thus to gaze on thee,

Sweet Chapel on the Tellenplatt,—* and dwell,
Though but in thought, on Rütli,† and the bay
Of noble Uri ;—each spot seems to tell
To rocks—of hardy heroes full as bold,—
To winds—of spirits full as free as they,—
To skies—where mountains soar is Freedom's hold!

* The spot where William Tell leaped ashore from Gesler's boat.

† A green meadow on a small ledge of rock; the midnight meeting-place of the founders of Swiss liberty.

XV.

VIEW OF SUNRISE FROM THE RIGHI, LAKE OF LUCERNE.

The mountains of this glorious land
Are conscious beings to my eye,
When at the break of day they stand,
Like giants, looking through the sky,
To hail the sun's unrisen car
That gilds their diadems of snow;
While one by one, as star by star,
Their peaks in ether glow.—*Montgomery.*

How chill the morn!
In the dim east no streak disparts the cloud;
Yet, hark! the cowherd winds the Alpine horn
Wildly and loud.

The stars are bright,
How still in the deep blue of Heav'n they shine!
They waken with their pure celestial light
Feelings divine.

Yet now on high,
Like lamps, which have their midnight watches done,
They faintly glimmer in the severing sky,
Before the sun.

A streak of day
Just breaks in the far beacons of the east;
And the curved moon, to thinnest light decreased,
Narrows her ray.

A line of gold
Spreads o'er yon hills,—the first reflected beam
Of the uprising sun,—whose gorgeous stream
Soon will unfold.

The morning spreads,—
The morning spreads upon the mountains grey;—
Like a thin mist from height to height it treads,
Calling the day

How the pale snow
On many an Alpine summit stretching far,
Catching on its cold top the sunny glow,
Gleams like a star.

Dim on the sky,
Lo! where the cold, white Jungfrau rests sublime,
Reflecting from its glaciers freezily
The morning's prime.

Peak behind peak,
Throughout this amphitheatre of hills
In slow succession soars with rosy streak,
As daylight fills.

The vapoury clouds
Spread far beneath me, hov'ring chill and white;
Like a thin veil, their curling surge enshrouds
The vale from sight.

The mist dispels,—
How gloriously expands the far-stretcht scene!
Each mountain, with its snowy pinnacles!
Each forest green!

Tranquil and blue,
Far, far beneath the stilly lakes appear,
Not yet illumined with the radiant hue
Of morning clear.

Now vales, and streams,
And bright-spired villages, break on the eye;
And far-off pine-slopes catch the ruddy beams
How lovelily!

The morning spreads,
The morning spreads upon the mountains bright;
A flood of glory, rolling on, it sheds
Its streams of light.

Beautiful morn!
How freshly on the hills thy foot-prints glow,—
Thus from the distant eastern chambers borne
Calmly and slow.

Beautiful sky!
The mountains lit by thee like altars rise,
Breathing in cloudy mists to God on high
Mute sacrifice.

Beautiful sun!
Beneath thy ray yon lake reflected lies,
Murmuring with gentle waves its orison
To the bright skies.

Sweet morning air!
Thou art so full and eloquent with sound,
That I can deem one universal prayer
Echoes around.

Awake, my heart,
To holiest praise, let soul and sense be given,
In the wide-uttered anthem bear thy part
To God—to Heav'n.

XVI.

THE DESCENT FROM MOUNT JURA.

Plus j' approchais de la Suisse, plus je me sentais ému. L' instant où, des hauteurs du Jura, je découvris le lac de Genève, fut un instant d' extase, et de ravissement . . . l' air des Alpes, si salutaire et si pure; le doux air de la patrie, plus suave que les parfums de l' orient; cette terre riche et fertile; ce paysage unique . . . . tout cela me jettait dans des transports que je ne puis décrire, et semblait me rendre à la fois la jouissance de ma vie entière.—*Rousseau.*

The sun is sinking, and, with parting gleams,
Is braiding colours o'er the purple west;
Like a gold diadem on Jura's crest,
How rich the mellow ray of glory streams!
Rounding this point,—this jutting crag,—it seems
As if a new world opened! Loveliest
Of vales and lakes, how calm your deep, still breast
Lies, as enamoured of the evening's beams!

Winding adown this road, o'erhung with woods
Of rich luxuriance, and the clustered gold
Of flower'd laburnums, the deep solitudes
Of distant Alps break on the ravished eye.
Oh! with what silent wonder I behold
Their bold, clear outline on the peaceful sky!

XVII.

LAKE OF GENEVA ABOUT VEVAY.

MORNING.

Day glimmered, and I went, a gentle breeze
Ruffling the Leman Lake. Wave after wave,
If such they might be called, dashed as in sport,
Not anger, with the pebbles on the beach,
Making wild music, and far-westward caught
The sun-beam.—*Rogers.*

How joyously the sunny ripples play,
  Like happy smiles, upon thy surface fair,
  Deep-bosomed lake! What freshness fills the air,
Breathing in sweetness o'er the new-born day!
Looking across thee, o'er La Tour's small bay,
  Bright villages, and sunny spots, which wear
  The hues of never-dying beauty, there
I trace,—Clarens, and Montreux, with the ray

Of morning on its chestnut woods,—and white
Chillon's far turrets,—and the mist-capped heights
Of Alps, just clearing in the strengthening light
Sweet lake, thy reflex lies upon my breast,—
Calm and unbroken in its deep delights,—
As in thy depths the imaged mountains rest.

XVIII.

LAKE OF GENEVA ABOUT VEVAY.

EVENING.

I STILL would love to wander by the side
Of happy inland waters, when they gleam
With the bright lustre of the evening stars.
I still would wander by the running stream,
And watch the sinking sun, and the soft clouds
Tinted with pearl and amber. I would gaze
Amid the stars, and let my winged thoughts
Go forth, piercing, like light, the universe.—*Waterston.*

How sweet the day-close spreads itself o'er thee,
Deeply-blue Leman! Whither shall I gaze,
Here, where the vine-clad slopes blush with the rays
Of rosy sunset? or where Meillérie
Lifts its dark rocks in sombre majesty?
Oh! while the last fond beam of eve delays
Looking upon thee;—and yon star displays

Its first soft beams, calling so silently
Its fellow-watchers in the clear calm sky,—
Let me inbreathe the stillness of the hour,
Into my inmost being;—and with eye
And sense and soul, entranced in deepest love,
Drink in the hushed and tranquillizing power
Which stills thy waves beneath—and Heaven above!

XIX.

THE MONTANVERT AND THE MER DE GLACE, CHAMOUNY.

——————————Je reviens vous chercher,
Sapins de Mont Envers, puissiez vous me cacher
Dans cet antre azuré que la glace environne,
Qu' entends-je! L' Arveron bondit et bouillonne.—*De Fontaine.*

Scenes of deep wonder, in a waking dream,
Or in some vision's fairy phantasies,
Do I thus gaze upon you! What surprize
Awes me as I look down from the extreme
Verge of this height, and catch the dashing stream,
Boiling below the dizzy precipice!
Upward I climb,—and now the Sea of Ice
Glitters beneath me in the noon-day beam;

How still its waves! like silver lava stopped
In its wild flow,—a billow-frozen floor,
Rugged with giant crystals,—neath which dwells
The sleepless Arve;—bleak mountains, tempest-topped,
Are round me, and sky-piercing pinnacles
Point up to heaven—bidding the heart adore!

XX.

THE ALPS.

Who first beholds those everlasting clouds--
Those mighty hills, so shadowy, so sublime,
As rather to belong to Heav'n than earth—
But instantly receives into his soul
A sense, a feeling, that he loses not—
A something that informs him 'tis an hour
Whence he may date henceforward and for ever.—*Rogers.*

Race of primeval rocks, whose olden date
Numbers before the flood for ages back;
Cloudland eternal, where the thunder-track
Is marked by ruin, deep and desolate;
Within thy ramparts,—crag-piled,—lofty,—great,—
Like a dark host, the wild storms bivouac,
When from rough war, and sweeping tempest-rack
Around your steeps they hang in cloudy state;—

Now resting in dense masses, like a pile
Of battlemented darkness,—and now bright
As their jagged sides, like banners of rich light,
Stream with the glory of the evening smile;—
Awe-breathing Alps, by human foot untrod,
Within your sky-roofed temple, Nature talks with God.

XXI.

MOUNT BLANC.

O DREAD and silent mount! I gazed upon thee
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer,
I worshipped the Invisible alone.—*Coleridge.*

MAJESTIC Mount, in whose vast solitude,
Awed Silence sits in voiceless wonder bound,
Unstartled with a stir of life or sound,
Save from the avalanche in ruin strewed
Beneath thee;—or the hoarse and sullen mood
Of tempests rolling their deep thunders round.
Wondrous alike thou soarest,—or when crowned
With diadem of clouds, and mists which brood
Like a thin, fleecy mantle o'er thee spread,—
Or resting on the clear, blue sky thy form
Of peerless whiteness, pinked with softest red,
As evening tinges thy translucent snows
With hues of rosy lustre;—calm or storm
Thy solemn mass in equal grandeur shows.

XXII.

TETE NOIRE.

"NIENTE di piu maestoso, niente di piu imponente; niente di piu sentimentale che il passagio detto del Tête Noire!"

How lone and rugged is the o'er-roofed way
Through this deep pine-forest; Silence is here
Unbroken; and, amid the twilight drear,
Hushed Solitude keeps endless Sabbath-day;
All, all is still and solemn; not a ray
Has pierced this gloom for centuries. I hear
Nought but the rustling pine-top,—or the near
Dash of tumultuous streams in their wild play
In the deep gorge below. The path descends,
And opens on the view an Alpine dale,
Where sunshine and blithe peace are smiling fair;
Ah! thus, when mid-life's rugged path descends,
And age is wending to life's downward vale,
May Heav'n's calm smile and hallowed peace be there.

XXIII.

SUGGESTED BY THE BLUE GENTIAN,

GROWING NEAR THE HOSPICE OF THE GREAT ST. BERNARD.

HERE doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue, blue, as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.—*Bryant.*

TINGED from the skies with blue as bright as they,
Sweet flower, thou smilest here amid the wild
Of bleak, grey rocks, and snows for ages piled;
Where the rare footstep tracks its toilsome way,
Here is thy cradle, where the chill winds play
With hail and snow-whirls, hardy Alpine child,—
Amid the desert growing pure and mild,—
Bidding the travel-worn a moment stay

To share the quiet of thy mountain scene;
Meek plant, thou art an emblem of that love,
Which, pure and warm within yon Hospice glows,—
Far from the cares of men, in peace serene
From its keen height, it looks to Heav'n above,
Unquenched and bright though mid eternal snows.

XXIV.

THE SEINE.

Chaque flot m' apporte une image;
Chaque rocher de ton rivage
Me fait souvenir ou rêver!—*Lamartine.*

The thoughts of other days, fair Normandie,
Thy very name evokes,—filling the mind
With many an old romaunt our youth entwined
With its wild, waking dreams of chivalry!
Sweet Seine, what legends float o'er memory,
As round each point on thy glad waves we wind,
Here catching Harfleur, and the scenes which bind
Our hearts to merry England,—there to see
The ruined Tankerville, with rifted wall,—
The wooded heights of Caudebec, and the grey
Twin shapes of yonder abbey-towers* which stand
Nobly in their decay;—now freshly fall
Upon the eye islands, by soft winds fanned,
And Rouen's spires in sunlight far away!

* Jumieges Abbey.

IN VITA DI LAURA.

SONETTO LXIX.

Lo innamorò la bellezza; pur la bellezza cessando, resterebbe l' amore.

Erano i capei d' oro all' aura sparsi,
Che 'n mille dolci nodi gli avvolgea;
E 'l vago lume oltra misura ardea
Di que' begli occhi, ch' or ne son sì scarsi;

E 'l viso di pietosi color farsi,
Non so se vero o falso, mi parea:
Io che l' esca amorosa al petto avea,
Qual maraviglia se di subit' arsi?

Non era l' andar suo cosa mortale,
Ma d' angelica forma; e le parole
Sonavan altro che pur voce umana.

Uno spirto celeste, un vivo sole
Fu quel ch' io vidi: e se non fosse or tale;
Piaga per allentar d' arco non sana.

TRANSLATIONS.

FROM PETRARCH.

TO LAURA IN LIFE

SONNET LXIX.

HER beauty enamours him, but his love would survive beauty.

HER locks of gold were given to the air,
That gently twined them into knots as light;
And from those eyes, the wand'ring glances bright,
Were not, as now, restrained with watchful care;

That face, at will, could Love's own colours wear,
Or false, or true, to gaze was full delight,
The flame thus raised soon took a bolder flight,
And taught my verse its ardour to declare.

Her noble mien bore not the stamp of earth,
But all celestial seemed;—her words of grace
Were sweet as though to angel harps attuned;

A living sun, bespeaking heavenly birth,
She met my sight,—now, if a change we trace,
The slack'ning of the bow—cures not the wound.

A. W.

SONETTO CXXVI.

Magnifica le bellezze e le virtù di Laura.

In qual parte del cielo, in quale idea
Era l' esempio, onde Natura tolse
Quel bel viso leggiadro, in ch' ella volse
Mostrar quaggiù quanto lassù potea?

Qual Ninfa in fonti, in selve mai qual Dea
Chiome d' oro sì fino all' aura sciolse?
Quando un cor tante in se virtuti accolse?
Benchè la somma è di mia morte rea.

Per divina bellezza indarno mira
Chi gli occhi di costei giammai non vide,
Come soavemente ella gli gira.

Non sa com' Amor sana, e come ancide,
Chi non sa come dolce ella sospira,
E come dolce parla e dolce ride.

SONNET CXXVI.

He extols the beauties and virtues of Laura.

From what rare sphere, from what excelling light,
Awoke the glowing thought whence Nature drew
That face, that form, which, viewed in proud delight,
She sent on earth to shew what Heav'n could do;

No fountain nymph, no sylvan goddess bright,
E'er to the breeze such locks of gold set free,
Or heart like hers in its own sphere unite
Such virtues rare,—though bringing death to me;

Vainly he thinks on looks divine to gaze,
Who has not met the glance of those sweet eyes,
Or felt their fatal force his heart beguile;

He knows not how Love wins or how betrays,
Who has not caught the music of her sighs,
Or heard and seen her blandly speak and smile.

A. W.

SONETTO CXXIX.

Porta invidia agli ameni luoghi da Laura passeggiati.

Lieti fiori e felici, e ben nate erbe,
Che Madonna passando premer suole;
Piaggia ch' ascolti sue dolci parole,
E del bel piede alcun vestigio serbe;

Schietti arboscelli, e verdi frondi acerbe;
Amorosette e pallide viole;
Ombrose selve, ove percote il sole,
Che vi fa co' suoi raggi alte e superbe;

O soave contrada; o puro fiume,
Che bagni 'l suo bel viso e gli occhi chiari,
E prendi qualità dal vivo lume;

Quanto v' invidio gli atti onesti e cari!
Non fia in voi scoglio omai, che per costume
D' arder con la mia fiamma non impari.

SONNET CXXIX.

He envies the pleasant spots trodden by Laura.

Gay smiling meads, in native beauty drest,
On which my lady's passing footsteps fell,
Her gentle words can your soft echoes tell,
Or flow'rs, just bent, shew where those footsteps prest.

Trees, whose bright foliage, like an emerald vest,
The fond, pale, violet shelters in the dell,—
Umbrageous woods, whose gloom she loved so well,—
At her approach ye seem in sunshine blest;

Oh! gentle stream, whose waters, flowing near,
Bathe that fair cheek,—and from those brilliant eyes
Catch a pure ray, more clear in lucid light,—

I envy you such tributes fond and dear,
Whilst I, consumed by Love's impassioned sighs,
Turn into waves of flame thy waters bright.

A. W.

SONETTO XI.

Ode il Poeta la viva voce di Laura.

Se lamentar augelli, o verdi fronde
Mover soavemente all' aura estiva,
O roco mormorar di lucid' onde
S' ode d' una fiorita e fresca riva;

Là 'v' io seggia, d' Amor pensoso, e scriva,
Lei che 'l ciel ne mostrò, terra n' asconde,
Veggio ed odo ed intendo: ch' ancor viva
Di sì lontano a' sospir miei risponde.

Deh perchè innanzi tempo ti consume
(Mi dice con pietate?) a che pur versi
Degli occhi tristi un doloroso fiume?

Di me non pianger tu: che miei dì fersi,
Morendo, eterni; e nell' eterno lume,
Quando mostrai di chiuder gli occhi, apersi.

TO LAURA IN DEATH.

SONNET XI.

THE Poet hears the living voice of Laura.

I SOUGHT where birds in soft laments deplore,
And in the summer air the green leaves wave,
Where on a verdant and a flowery shore,
The lucid wave its broken murmurs gave.

The while I sat of Love's sad woes to write,
She, whose adored remains the cold grave hides,
Answered my sighs from yon blest realms of light,
Where yet in bliss her spirit pure resides :—

" Why thus before thy time consume away ?"
Pitying my griefs, in soothing tones she cried,
" Why do those looks a breaking heart betray ?
And those dimmed eyes pour forth their bitter tide.

Weep not for me ;—death has but made my days
One blest, unchanging scene, in glory bright ;
Closed were these eyes, and quenched their mortal rays,
But to re-open on eternal light !"

A. W.

SONETTO XVII.

Apparizioni e consigli di Laura.

Nè mai pietosa madre al caro figlio,
Nè donna accesa al suo sposo diletto
Diè con tanti sospir, con tal sospetto
In dubbio stato sì fedel consiglio;

Come a me quella che 'l mio grave esiglio
Mirando dal suo eterno alto ricetto,
Spesso a me torna coll' usato affetto,
E di doppia pietate ornata il ciglio,

Or di madre, or d' amante: or teme, or arde
D' onesto foco, e nel parlar mia mostra
Quel che 'n questo viaggio fugga o segua,

Contando i casi della vita nostra;
Pregando ch' al levar l'ama non tarde:
E sol quant' ella parla ho pace o tregua.

SONNET XVII.

THE semblance and counsels of Laura.

SUCH cautious care, breathed through affection's sighs,
No tender mother on her child bestowed;
Or gentle wife, whose heart with love o'erflowed,
Such counsel gave, so faithful, fond, and wise,

As *she*, who now enshrined above the skies,
Looking upon me from her bright abode
With more of pity than on earth she shewed,
And double kindness beaming from her eyes,

By turns in thrilling accents now betrays
A mother's fears, and now Love's purest fire,
Teaching me where to choose, and what to flee;

Thus op'ning to my view life's chequered ways,
She bade me seek those joys that never tire,
And such sweet words brought peace and joy to me.

A. W.

SONETTO XX.

Valchiusa è divenuta un luogo di dolore.

I' ho pien di sospir quest' aer tutto,
D' aspri colli mirando il dolce piano
Ove nacque colei ch' avendo in mano
Mio cor in sul fiorire e 'n sul far frutto,

E gita al cielo; ed hammi a tal condutto
Col subito partir, che di lontano
Gli occhi miei stanchi lei cercando in vano,
Presso di se non lassan loco asciutto.

Non è sterpo nè sasso in questi monti,
Non ramo o fronda verde in queste piagge,
Non fior in queste valli o foglia d' erba,

Stilla d' acqua non vien di queste fonti,
Nè fiere han questi boschi sì selvagge,
Che non sappian quant' è mia pena acerba.

SONNET XX.

VAUCLUSE has become a place of grief.

To ev'ry sound, save sighs, this air is mute,
When from rude rocks, I view the smiling land
Where *she* was born, who held my life in hand
From its first bud till blossoms turned to fruit:

To Heav'n she's gone, and I'm left destitute
To mourn her loss, and cast around in pain
These wearied eyes, which, seeking her in vain
Where'er theyturn, o'erflow with grief acute;

There's not a root or stone amongst these hills,
Nor branch nor verdant leaf 'midst these soft glades,
Nor in the valley flowery herbage grows;

Nor liquid drop the sparkling fount distils,
Nor savage beast that shelters in these shades,
But knows how sharp my grief—how deep my woes.

A. W.

SONETTO XXIV.

PIANGE, e dice di por fine ai versi d' amore.

Gli occhi di ch' io parlai sì caldamente,
E le braccia e le mani e i piedi e 'l viso,
Che m' avean sì da me stesso diviso,
E fatto singular dall' altra gente;

Le crespe chiome d' or puro lucente,
E 'l lampeggiar dell' angelico riso,
Che solean far in terra un paradiso;
Poca polvere son, che nulla sente:

Ed io pur vivo; onde mi doglio e sdegno,
Rimaso senza 'l lume ch' amai tanto,
In gran fortuna e 'n disarmato legno.

Or sia qui fine al mio amoroso canto:
Secca è la vena dell' usato ingegno,
E la cetera mia rivolta in pianto.

SONNET XXIV.

He laments, and declares an end to his verses of love.

When first I saw her in proud beauty's glow;
And those sweet eyes awoke my raptured lays,
'Twas Love's bold task my humble song to raise
Above myself, and all this world below!

To sing those tresses in their golden flow,
The light'ning of that smile, those starry rays,
In whose pure light 'twas Heav'n met your gaze,
Now changed to senseless dust—yet oh!

Still must I live, a dreary life to weep,
Bereft of all this sad heart loved so well,
Whether my bark sailed on midst hopes or fears,

Soon will this storm of grief be hushed to sleep,
The soul's bright spark that wakened at her spell
Is darkened now—and hushed my lyre in tears.

A. W.

SONETTO XXXI.

Annovera ed esalta le doti di Laura.

Ov' è la fronte che con picciol cenno
Volgea 'l mio core in questa parte e'n quella!
Ov è 'l bel ciglio, e l' una e l' altra stella
Ch' al corso del mio viver lume denno!

Ov' è 'l valor, la conoscenza e 'l senno,
L' accorta onesta umil dolce favella?
Ove son le bellezze accolte in ella,
Che gran tempo di me lor voglia fenno?

Ov' è l ombra gentil del viso umano
Ch' ora e riposo dava all' alma stanca,
E là 've i miei pensier scritti eran tutti?

Ov' è colei che mia vita ebbe in mano?
Quanto al misero mondo, e quanto manca
Agli occhi miei che mai non fieno asciutti!

SONNET XXXI.

He recounts and exalts the endowments of Laura.

Where is the look, whose wish, or deep or slight,
Could turn this heart obedient to its sway?
Where the clear brow, and where the brilliant ray
Of each twin star that fed my life with light?

Where is the sense, the courage, high and bright,
Where the bland accents mild as op'ning day?
Where the sweet grace of beauty's witching play
That formed at once my torment and delight?

Where the soft shade of that enchanting face,
Gazing on which the troubled soul was blest,
And whence I date fair Poësy's first glow?

Where is she gone, who spread o'er life such grace?
Earth mourns the blank—but far above the rest
My grief is such, that tears must ever flow.

A. W.

SONETTO XXXII.

Apostrofe al cielo, alla terra, e a tutto ciò che possiede qualche parte di Laura.

Quanta invidia ti porto, avara terra
Ch' abbracci quella cui veder m' è tolto,
E mi contendi l' aria del bel volto
Dove pace trovai d' ogni mia guerra!

Quanta ne porto al ciel che chiude e serra,
E sì cupidamente ha in se raccolto
Lo spirto da le belle membra sciolto;
E per altrui sì rado si disserra!

Quanta invidia a quell' anime che 'n sorte
Hann' or sua santa e dolce compagnia,
La qual io cercai sempre con tal brama!

Quanta alla dispietata e dura morte,
Ch' avendo spento in lei la vita mia,
Stassi ne' suoi begli occhi, e me non chiama!

SONNET XXXII.

An apostrophe to Heaven, to earth, and every thing which possesses any part of Laura.

What envy of the greedy earth I bear,
That holds from me within its cold embrace
The light, the meaning, of that angel face,
On which to gaze could soften e'en despair.

What envy of the Saints, in realms so fair,
Who eager seemed, from that bright form of grace,
The spirit pure to summon to its place,
Amidst those joys, but few can hope to share;

What envy of the blest in Heav'n above,
With whom she dwells in sympathies divine
Denied to me on earth, though sought in sighs;

And oh! what envy of stern death I prove,
That with her life has ta'en the light of mine,
Yet calls me not,—though fixed and cold those eyes.

A. W.

SONETTO XXXVII.

Prega Laura di mirarlo dal cielo.

Anima bella, da quel nodo sciolta
Che più bel mai non seppe ordir Natura,
Pon dal ciel mente alla mia vita oscura
Da sì lieti pensieri a pianger volta:

La falsa opinion dal cor s' è tolta,
Che mi fece alcun tempo acerba e dura
Tua dolce vista; omai tutta secura
Volgi a me gli occhi, e i miei sospiri ascolta.

Mira 'l gran sasso donde Sorga nasce,
E vedraivi un che sol tra l' erbe e l' acque
Di tua memoria e di dolor si pasce.

Ove giace 'l tuo albergo, e dove nacque
Il nostro amor, vo ch' abbandoni e lasce,
Per non veder ne' tuoi quel ch' e te spiacque.

SONNET XXXVII.

He entreats Laura to behold him from Heaven.

Blest spirit, thrown aside the mortal veil,
That Nature wove, in Heav'n's likeness here,
Deign to behold from thy triumphant sphere,
Him, who but lives, life's burthen to bewail.

No longer passion's erring dreams prevail,
To bid thee wound me with a look severe,
But, with those gentle glances freed from fear,
Read in these altered looks my heart's sad tale,

Then, view the rocky shore where Sorga flows,
And there, beside the stream, midst herbage bright,
See him, who only lives to weep for thee:

But on thy late abode, e'en where arose
Our dawn of love, turn not those eyes of light,
Lest they behold what may displeasing be.

A. W.

SONETTO XLIII.

Il rosignuolo lo invita al pianto.

Quel rosignuol che sì soave piagne
Forse suoi figli o sua cara consorte,
Di dolcezza empie il cielo e la campagne
Con tante note sì pietose e scorte;

E tutta notte par che m' accompagne,
E mi rammenti la mia dura sorte:
Ch' altri che me non ho, di cui mi lagne;
Che 'n Dee non credev' io regnasse Morte.

O che lieve è ingannar chi s' assecura!
Que' duo bei lumi assai più che 'l sol chiari,
Chi pensò mai veder far terra oscura!

Or conosco io, che mia fera ventura
Vuol che vivendo e lagrimando impari
Come nulla quaggiù diletta e dura.

SONNET XLIII.

THE nightingale invites him to lamentation.

THOUGH sad the notes that tell of her lone fate,
Yon nightingale, that fondly thus complains,
With thrilling sweetness fills the groves and plains,
Although to mourn her children and her mate.

Mingling my sighs midst evening's shades I wait
Again to weep o'er all that now remains
Of *one* I blindly thought above the pains
That bring this mortal frame to death's dark gate;

How easy of belief, he, who could gaze
On those sweet eyes, as cloudless sunshine clear,
And think the tomb would ever hide their light;

This lesson to my stricken soul conveys
That nought but sorrow is our portion here,
All earthly joys uncertain—safe in flight.

A. W.

SONETTO LXXII.

Descrive le apparizioni di Laura.

Ripensando a quel ch' oggi il ciel onora,
Soave sguardo, al chinar l' aurea testa,
Al volto, a quella angelica modesta
Voce che m' addolciva, ed or m' accora;

Gran maraviglia ho com' io viva ancora;
Nè vivrei già, se chi tra bella e onesta,
Qual fu più, lasciò in dubbio, non sì presta
Fosse al mio scampo là verso l' aurora.

O che dolci accoglienze e caste e pie!
E come intentamente ascolta e nota
La lunga istoria delle pene mie!

Poi che 'l dì chiaro par che la percota,
Tornasi al ciel, che sa tutte le vie,
Umida gli occhi e l' una e l' altra gota.

SONNET LXXII.

He describes the apparition of Laura.

'Tis sweet, though sad, my trembling thoughts to raise,
As memory dwells upon that form so dear,
And think that now e'en angels join to praise,
The gentle virtues that adorned her here;
That face, that look, in fancy to behold,—

To hear that voice that did with music vie,—
The bending head, crowned with its locks of gold,—
All, *all* that charmed, now but sad thoughts supply.
How had I lived her bitter loss to weep,
If that pure spirit, pitying my woe,

Had not appeared to bless my troubled sleep,
Ere memory broke upon the world below;
What pure, what gentle greetings then were mine,
In what attention wrapt she paused to hear

My life's sad course, of which she bade me speak;
But as the dawn from forth the east did shine
Back to that Heav'n to which her way was clear,
She fled,—while falling tears bedewed each cheek.

A. W.

THE DOWRY.

FROM CLEMENTI BONDI.

Not from Batavian looms, the produce rare,
Nor the silk robe, with gold embroidered o'er,—
Not the rich jewels, from the eastern shore,
That sparkle on thy breast and gem thy hair;

Not all the precious gifts fond friends prepare,
Of rings and ornaments, a costly store,—
Not the ancestral honours won of yore
By thy proud race, whose deeds their names declare;

Nor yet the fleeting boon of beauty's pride,—
Nor of first youth the freshly op'ning flow'r,—
Form in *my* sight thy rarest charm, sweet bride;

'Tis the pure heart, the educated mind,
To virtue dear, *these* cheer the saddest hour,
And light our path when Fortune proves unkind.

A. W.

THE SNARES OF IDLENESS.

FROM GIAMBATTISTI VOLPI.

Quick as the lightning's flash the war-horse flies,
And fearless dashes o'er the embattled plain,
But, in the meadow, free from bit and rein,
With rest and ease, his wonted spirit dies.

The stream, whose lucid brightness oft supplies,
A mirror to some nymph of beauty vain,
If noisome weeds its shining course restrain,
Soon midst the miry waste its freshness flies.

If anchored long, worms pierce the gallant mast
Of some proud ship, that once could bravely fling
Back from its prow, the wild waves as they came;

Hence let the young this striking truth hold fast,
And know that idleness clips youth's fresh wing,
And checks its flight to honour, wealth, and fame.

A. W.

SONG IS THE SOLACE OF CARE.

FROM GIO. LEONI. SEMPRONIO.

THE sailor sings as on the vessel goes,
And all his cares seem lightened by the strain;
The shepherd sings, while, on the open plain,
He tends his flock, and toil seems sweet repose;

The pris'ner sings, and songs his heart dispose
To view his narrow cell with lessened pain;
The labourer sings, as falls the yellow grain,
And noon-tide's sultry heat unheeded glows.

The sturdy smith sings 'neath the morn's first rays,
While following the song, the strokes fall fast,
Making the answ'ring anvil sharply ring;

And so with *me*, —'tis not for fame or praise,
But to assuage the sorrows round me cast,—
Whether by Fortune or by Love,—I sing.

A. W.

I.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF CRESCEMBINI.

A VIRGIN rose, whose lightsome dress
Was loveliness,
Looked out and smiled upon the morning;
And o'er its birth, in lucid streams,
The sunny beams,
All glistening fell, its leaves adorning.

Kissed by the rays of morning light,
Warm, pure, and bright,
It twined its leaves in folding cluster;
And mid its handmaid flowers it smiled,
Like Hesper mild,
When it outbeams each star in lustre.

Each flow'r drooped softly to caress
Its sultaness;
Love framed his darts from thorns beneath it;
Maidens and youths, in warm desire,
Paused to admire,
And in their sunny locks to wreathe it.

But that same sun, whose radiance lent
Each blandishment,
And to the rose each crimson blush imparted;—
That sun, when climbing fierce and bright
Its zenith height,—
Its cloudless rays around it darted.

The stricken rose, pale, seared, and dead,
Drooped down its head,
And in the darkling dell was shaded;
It fell, ah me! it fell around
On the cold ground,
Its fragrance lost,—its beauty faded.

Young hearts, give heed! the gentle flow'r
Which morning's hour
Circles with sunny wreath of brightness,
Is life,—which childhood's sunny beams
And youth's wild dreams
Picture so gay in airy lightness.

But ah! beware! for Love has guile
Beneath its smile,
And poison 'neath its buds of gladness;—
For beam-eyed Pleasure oft-time brings
Upon its wings
An *hour* of joy,—an *age* of sadness!

II.

THE GRAVE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF SALIS-SEEWIS.

The grave is deep and still,—
  Its brink is dread and lone;—
It covers, with black veil,
  A land unknown!

The nightingale's soft note
  Echoes not there its sound;—
Affection's scattered rose
  Decks but its mound.

There friends bereft may wring
  Their sorrowing hands around;
No tear, no cry, can pierce
  The deep, deep ground.

Yet here is not our rest!—
  Sighing for peace we roam;
Only through Death's dark gate
  Man reaches home.

Here driven to and fro,
The sad heart longs for shore;
There it has reached,—where storms
Can beat no more!

III.

WINGS! WINGS!

FROM THE GERMAN OF RUCKERT.

Wings! oh! wings! to hover o'er
Mountain, vale, and stream;—
Wings on which my heart may soar
On the morning's beam.

Wings! to float above the sea
In the dawn's new breath,—
Wings! on which my soul may flee
Life, the grave, and death.

Wings! as once my youthtide had
When it sped away;—
Wings! as when joy's fleeting shade
Lured my heart astray.

Wings! to fly to—(though in vain!)—
Days which long have passed,
Wings! to bring back hopes again
Scattered to the blast.

Wings! to flee like nightingales,
(When the rose has died,)
Leaving far the misty vales,
Where no flow'rs abide.

Ah! from this drear shore to fly,
In transporting flight,
Homeward to yon happy sky,
Where the crown is bright.

Wings! as when the silk-worm breaks
From its glossy bands,
And its radiant pinion shakes
As its tomb expands.

Often, in the still midnight,
Up I seem to rise,
Borne on airy visions light
To the starry skies.

Yet the wings on which I soar,
In the world of dreams,
Soon droop down to earth once more,
With the waking beams.

As of old, the sun's hot blaze
Scorched the stripling's wings ;—
Thus sink down, with morning's rays,
Night's imaginings !

IV.

FROM THE GERMAN OF ARNDT.

The sun in the skies made his circuit wide
Round the world ;
And the little stars said—" We will move by thy side
Round the world :"
And the sun it was wroth,—and said—" Stay you at home,
I shall burn your small eyes out, if near me you roam,
In my fiery course round the world."

And the little stars went to the moon on high
In the night ;
And said—" Lovely moon, who dost shine in the sky
In the night,

We will wander with thee ;—for thy softer ray
Will not dazzle our little eyes away."
And they journeyed with *her* through the night.

Now, welcome, ye stars, and thou moon so fair,
In the night ;
Ye know the hushed heart, and the musings there,
In the night,
Come kindle your cresset lamps in the sky,
That I may companion you joyfully
In the quiet scenes of night.

V.

HEAVEN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF RUCKERT.

The spacious Heav'n is held in God's right hand,
A letter, broad and full, of azure blue,—
Years it has kept its bright unchanging hue,
And still for ages will unfading stand.
In this great letter, so divinely planned,

Mysterious revelations, stand to view.
The sun is its broad seal, which, ever true,
Guards, lest its ample foldings should expand;—
But when night takes this brilliant seal away,
Then reads the eye its thousand characters;—
Which all in hieroglyphic oneness say
That God is love—unchangeably the same;—
This, the great Truth, that outspread brief avers,
That Love God's Nature is,—and Love His Name!*

VI.

CRADLE HYMN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF ALBERTINI.

Sleep, thou infant dear;
God's good angels near,
As guards, their quiet watch are keeping,
Folding their wings above thee sleeping,
Shedding stillness blest
O'er thy place of rest.

* The last lines are somewhat altered from the original.

Sweet Peace, from on high,
Holds back the grief and sigh
Far from thee; sorrows, which encumber
The sad breast, break not thy slumber;
Rest thee still and mild,
Sleep, thou dearest child.

VII.

TO RHODOCLEA.

FROM THE GREEK OF RUFINUS.

I SEND this wreath of lovely flow'rs, my Rhodocléa fair,
Which I, with my own hands have twined, to braid amid thy hair,—
The lily, and anemoné, and rose-cup here are set,
The dewy-lipped narcissus, and the purple violet;
Then wreathe thy brows, my fairest, and pass vain-glory by,
For thou, and this sweet garland, must blossom, and then—die!

VIII.

TRANSLATED FROM AN EPITAPH,

IN THE CHURCH-YARD OF BURGLEN, NEAR ALTDORF.*

Happy are they, who, through life's journey here,
The narrow path-way of well-doing heed,
And humbly moving in their destined sphere,
For future harvests sow the precious seed.
As a soft slumber, still and peaceful, keeps
The travail-laden in its curtain furled,—
So is the good man's death;—in peace he sleeps,
Afar and quiet in the better world.

* The above translation is introduced as a most pleasing memorial of a bright day spent in a sweet spot,—the romantic church-yard of the village of Bürglen. The village, its church, and church-yard, are alike unpretending,—the charm is in the beautiful surrounding scenery of the Schachenthal, and its undying associations. Bürglen was William Tell's birth-place,—a rude chapel, by the church-yard, commemorates the leading outlines of his patriotic career; and in the headlong stream hard by, he lost his life while endeavouring to rescue a child carried down by its inundation.

IX.

FROM THE GERMAN OF LUDWIG TIECK.

Fieldwards a little bird took flight,
And warbled, in the gay sunlight,
A sweet and wondrous roundelay:—
"Adieu! I fly away, away,
Far, far,
This day afar!"

I listened to its woodland song,
So sad, so sweetly, borne along;
With grave delight, with joyful pain,
My bosom rose and sunk again;
"Heart! heart!
Is it breaking with joy or grief thou art?"

I saw the leaves were falling sear,—
"Ah!" said I, "Autumn-time is here;—
Away the summer swallow hies;—
So love,—so ardent longing,—flies
Far, far,
Where sunbeams are!"

The gay sunlight broke out anew,
And back the little warbler flew;
It saw upon my cheek the tear,
And sang—"Love knows no winter drear,
No! no!
'Tis one bright spring, and bideth so!"

X.

FROM THE GERMAN OF RUCKERT.

As Solomon, in days of yore,
Was musing Nature's beauties o'er.—
He lighted on a sower sowing,
On ev'ry side the rich grain throwing.

"What dost thou, friend?" exclaimed the king,
"No harvest here the ground will bring;
Cease from the task which thou pursuest,
Thou wilt not reap the grain thou strewest."

The sower ceased;—down sunk his hands,—
A moment, fixed in thought, he stands,—
Then briskly to his work returning,
Answered the king with wise discerning:—

This field is all I have to till,
'Tis ploughed and ready to my will;
Why need I be my heart distressing,—
The grain from me,—from God the blessing."

XI.

OPPORTUNITY.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF NICOLO MACHIAVELLI.

"Who art thou, who no mortal form appearest,
Graced with such dowry of celestial mould?
Say, too, why at thy feet those wings thou wearest?"
My name is Opportunity! Behold
Few notice me! I labour as you see,
For on a wheel my restless foot I hold.
No flight can with my running hope to vie,
And, therefore, at my feet these wings I bear,
That each may view me with a dazzled eye.
My locks in front all scattered thus I wear,
With them my breast, with them my face I hide,

That none may know me when I first appear.
My tresses from behind so close are tied,
That each poor wight toils after me in vain,
If I have passed him or have turned aside."—
"But who is she who follows in thy train?"
"It is Repentance;—prithee mark her well,
Who seizes not me, *her* hands detain.
E'en now, whilst thus in parlance thou dost dwell,
By vain and curious thoughts all idly led,
'Tis not, alas! to *thee* perceivable
That, I already, from *thy* hands have fled!"

XII.

PROVIDENCE.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF VINCENZO DA FILICAJA.

As a fond mother watches anxiously
Her little ones, with deepest care imprest,—
One kissing on its brow,—and to her breast
Clasping another,—whilst upon her knee
A third she fondles,—heeding wistfully

Each wish, by word or look or sigh expressed ;
Soothing alike their childish cares to rest—
And, pleased or pained, still loving tenderly.
Thus, over all, does God's good Providence
Its eye, its care, its comfort, still extend,
Hearing and aiding each with love intense ;
And, if it e'er denies an ear to lend,
Denies that we the more may importune;
Or seeming to deny, yet grants the boon.

POETIC MISCELLANIES.

I.

THE DREAMS.

Quale è colui che somniando vede,
E dopo 'l sogno la passione impressa
Rimane, e l' altro alla mente non riede;
Cotál son io, che quasi tutta cessa
Mea visione, ed ancór mi distilla
Nel cuore il dolce che nacque da essa.

Paradiso di Dante.

Beyond the mountains' purpled crown
The summer's sun went slowly down,
In richest glories drest;
But still there lingered one faint ray,
As rear-guard to the parting day,
Along the crimson west.

The first-seen star, so still and bright,
Which gleams athrough the pale twilight,
Was scatt'ring from its urn on high
Its silver softness o'er the sky;
Lighting with far and twinkling ray
The ling'ring night upon her way.
Each hill, seen through the misty blue,
Which eve around the landscape shed,
More distant, fancy deemed, withdrew,
And loftier reared its shadowy head,
Across the downs the curfew-bell
Had ceased to send its distant sound;
Silence o'er all had wound a spell,
And tiptoe-paced was gliding round.

. . . . . .

The twilight hour of evening passed,—
The world was hushed and still;
Deep and more deep the shades were cast
O'er valley, stream, and hill.

. . . . . .

Each trace of day had fully gone,
And midnight's stillest hour came on;
Through fleecy clouds, all pearly white,
The moon was speeding on her way,
Spreading her purest streams of light,
As through the changes of the night
Calm Nature slumbering lay;

While o'er her sleep the distant choirs
Of Pleiads beating their soft wires,
Sang spirit madrigals to their aerial lyres.

. . . . . .

The scene was changed;—the moon went down,—
The shadows gathered deep and brown;
But here and there, the clouds between,
The intermitting stars were seen.
A change stole o'er me, calm and deep,
It was not waking,—it was not sleep,—
It was no vision of things that be,—
But Fancy's airy pageantry;
Fancy, which oft to the mind unfolds
More than the waking eye beholds;
Listen, then, to what Fancy brings,
Truth interwrought with imaginings.

The sable Night, in ebon car,
  Now neared the silent, chilly bound,—
The sentry-post of the utmost star—
  Which she passes in her silent round;
That car moved on in dark array,
Like the funeral hearse of departed day,
With coal-black steed, and wheels of jet,
And tears of the weeping evening wet;
Its spokes were moist with dewy show'rs,

And Silence,—Slumber's tacit bride,—
Round the rolling circles tied
Feath'ry bands, and folded flowers,
On in darkling panoply,
Thus the Night, in silent march,
Passed the wide triumphal arch.
Which darkness reared from sea to sea.
Broad behind her, as she rode,
Clouds, like streaming banners, flowed;
Sleep the dull and heavy rider—
Sleep, the victor, rode beside her;
Heavy was his eye and dim,
Stretched anon with vacant stare;
Languid was each joint and limb.—
Flushed his cheek,—and wild his hair.
Downward in his heavy hand
Drooped the leaden-pointed lance,
Which, upheld o'er sea and land,
Slumber, Drowsiness, and Trance,
O'er the prostrate world advance.
Nightmare bore his cumbrous shield,
And fickle dreams, a countless throng,
Round the car in chorus wheeled,
Leading the mystic dance along.
Some were nimble, light, and airy,
Nurtured in the land of fairy;

Some of such transparent hue,
The star-beams pierced them through and through;
Some were heavy, dull, and slow,
Born where sluggish waters flow
In the sunless shades below;
Some, like *ignis-fatuus* lights,
Through the moist and misty nights
Of the vapoury autumn-tide,
Beckoned to the torrent's side,
Then, melting into shapeless air,
Left the harassed sleeper there;
Some on bold, adventurous pinion,
Soared above the world's pavilion;
Some across their features pale,
Drew a thinly-whimpled veil;*
Some had power to prophesy
Of the dim futurity;
And some were framing tales and fears
Of wrecks, and wars, and kindred tears,
To whisper in the sleeper's ears.
Momentary were the glancings
  Of their shadow-cinctured feet,—
Swift their hand-in-hand advancings,
  Swift their changes and retreat;

* Under a veil that whimpled was full low.—*Spenser.*

Each one of the visioned band
A magic mirror held in hand,
O'er whose ever-shifting glass
Countless shadows fleeting pass.

SLEEP.

Through the death-like domain of Night's echo-
less reign,
My slumberous shadow I cast,
And prostrate and still is the world at my will,—
My fetters are clankless and fast.
The Night is my mother, and Death my half-
brother;
For ages my power must be,—
I was born ere the Light put old Chaos to flight,
For all things were shadowed by me.
My realm has no ends,—and my mandate extends
Over air, over earth, over sea;
I govern creation with mild domination;
The universe bends at my knee.
Drowsy-pinioned I sail, like a cloud of dark hail,
Or a pestilence over the land,
And with mantle outspread over Nature's still bed,
Like the Visiting Angel I stand.
When my robe is unfurled o'er the dream-folded
world,

The strong eagle scales to its nest.
When my hand is spread forth,—from the south
to the north,
The herds of the wilderness rest.
When my visions I weave o'er the dim eye of Eve,
Neath my curtain hushed Nature is still,—
And man, worn with cares, to my soft lap repairs,
Ere the stars their night-watches fulfil.
E'en the victor to me bends a feodal knee;
Kings feel my invisible stroke;
And the chiefs of the land, overthrown by my hand,
Submissive pass under my yoke.
Through earth's stubborn mass, like a vapour I
pass,
Where the blind-worm is delving its bed;
And I sing lullabies, where the sea-maiden lies,
With her curtain of waters outspread.

TO THE DREAMS.

Ye Dreams, whose delight is the province of
night,—
Ye embryo shadows of things,—
Ye visions who shed o'er the slumberer's head
The oblivious dew of your wings.
Ye wardens, who keep the watch-towers of Sleep,

And wake at the death-knell of Day,—
To what realms have ye been, in what subtle-wrought mien,
Say, spirits and shadows, say.

FIRST DREAM.

I took my stand by a poet's bed,
As he pressed his hand on his throbbing head;
His scattering curls were backward flung,
And chill death-pearls on his forehead hung;
His leaf was seared in its spring-tide bloom,
And by Sorrow was reared, to be nipt by the tomb;
His bosom is torn by neglect and care,
And the arrow of scorn is rankling there;
Yet he dreams of fame and the minstrel lay,
Of a deathless name, and a wreath of bay,—
But on pillow of thorn will he waken to sorrow,
Ere finger of Morn shall beckon the morrow.
Hail! King Sleep.

SECOND DREAM.

An old man was sleeping, but raved in his sleep,
And o'er him was weeping one wonted to weep;
Hot and deep like a flame there was burning within,
The workings of shame, the corrodings of sin;

Guilt, damning and black, straining wild at his heart,
Like a torturer's rack made him quiver and start.
But that maiden addressed her warm accents to Heav'n,
That conscience might rest,—and his guilt be forgiv'n,
From her eye there fell lightly a daughter's fond tear,
Which a seraph bore brightly to Heav'n's calm sphere;
Nor in vain was that tear,—nor in vain was that prayer,
For Mercy's soft ear bent in tenderness there,—
I sped to unharden that cold, guilty breast,
And to whisper of pardon, forgiveness, and rest;—
Oh! sweet was my mission,—I hovered on high,
As the tear of contrition shone bright in his eye!
Hail! King Sleep.

THIRD DREAM.

A maniac raved in his strong iron bars,
The night-cold he braved, and he cursed the red stars;
His chains clenched him fastly, and gnawed through his skin;

His aspect was ghastly, and bloodless, and thin.
His eye-balls rolled wildly, as moved by a spell,
As the moon scattered mildly her beams through
his cell;
The spark of his reason was quenched by despair,
And Woe's wintry season had withered his hair;
His wild-uttered groan, as he writhed in his pain,
Was like the far moan of the waves of the main.—
Like mist on the heath, o'er his temples I stole,
And cooled with my breath, the hot surge of his
soul;
Beguiled by my trance, the wild lunatic dreams,
He leads up the dance on the moon's spirit beams.
Hail! King Sleep.

FOURTH DREAM.

On gossamer pinions I flew to the north,
O'er its sullen dominions to pour out my wrath;
Dark forebodings I shed from an evil star
O'er the restless bed of the despot czar.
Away then I burst on my steed, ho! ho!
Many a verst, many a verst, o'er Siberia's snow,
And, with echoless tread, like an angel I stole
To watch o'er the head of a patriot Pole.
In his cell he reclined on his martial cloak,
Unconquered in mind, and in spirit unbroke,

Though the fetter's cold fang gnawed him sullenly deep,
(For I heard the dull clang as he turned in his sleep.)
I gazed on his brow, and its gashes were bare,
But though paler than snow, stern defiance was there;
For that firm-fettered foot was the foremost in war,
When rose the loud shout, and the Cossaque hurrah;—
His wounds are undrest and his dungeon is chill,
But the patriot's breast is unruffled and still.
Hail! King Sleep.

FIFTH DREAM.

The sickly moon sank faint and chill from on high,
And gazed ghastly blank with her lack-lustre eye,
As cinctured in white, like a corse in its shroud,
She melted from sight in her cerements of cloud;
For the heralds of light had begun to unfold
Their banners all bright with cerulean and gold;
And, wakened to mirth, the fair handmaiden Day
Was smiling o'er earth from her lattice of grey;
And with censer of love, and with rose-plaited hair,
Tripped it light from above down her amethyst stair;

A student had slept not, but soaring afar
On the wild wings of Thought, had outvigiled
each star;
O'er his watchings I passed at the grey morning
hour,
I fettered him fast, and he bends to my power.
Hail! King Sleep.

SIXTH DREAM.

Like a phantom I went at the close of the fray,
To the crimson tent where a warrior lay;
The foeman's gashes are deep on his brow,
But in fancy he dashes his steed o'er the foe;
No more for him shall the trumpet sound,
The sabre gleam, nor the charger bound;
No more for him shall the onset peal,
Nor the sinewy limb be buckled in steel;
For he grapples with Death, whose unerring blow
Will despoil him of breath ere the moon shall be low
Yet dreams he of shouting, which rends the sky,
And gay banners flouting for victory.
Hail! King Sleep.

CHORUS OF DREAMS.

Hail! King Sleep!
Thy vassals, we
Our charges keep
O'er earth and sea.
Around thy car
We, fleeting, fly,
Till morning star
Lead day on high.
Empowered by thee,
O'er all we flee,
And potently
Our spells avail;
We bow us down
Before thy throne,
Thy power to own,
All hail! all hail!

SEMI-CHORUS.

Lo! where, pillioned side by side,
Our gauzy-mantled sisters ride;
Speeding hither on their way,
Mounted on their clouds of grey;
Swift as hurricanes in flight,
Or the rapid beams of light.

Welcome, sisters, welcome here,
Sentries o'er the sleeping sphere,
Spirits black, and spirits white,
Who ply the distaff of the night,
Webs from airy shuttles weaving,
(When the wolf his lair is leaving,)
Spreading broad a pall of grey
O'er the beauty-waning day;
Spirits of the now and then,
Whose paths are through the thoughts of men,
Where, like parting storms, ye flee
In infinite variety;
Ye, who, aiding things of woe,
In their pilgrimage below,
The wilderness of life have blest
With caravanserais* of rest,
And tents of spider-woof outspread
Between the living and the dead;
Frail as the ephemera's fret-work
O'er the silkworm's flimsy net-work;
Shadows, whose mysterious seal
None of earth-born can reveal,
Ages yet, as ages past,
Your thin-veiled essences shall last,

* The caravan-serai is the halting-place in the Desert where the caravan stays for the night.

Ever earth's, and air's, and sea's,
Incomprehensibilities ;—
Spirits one, and spirits all,
Sporting round the rolling ball,
What diviner shall expound
Your resting-place or lotted bound ?
Whence ye come, and where ye flee,
With your phantom pageantry ?
If ye sleep beneath the wave,
Or in Lapland witches' cave ?
Where the lingering Arctic night
Pours its icy-freezing light
On the crystal regions clear
One long portion of the year.—
Ye, whose superstructures fair,—
Built of cloud and based on air,—
A moment into grandeur makes,
A moment into nothing shakes ;
From your vapour-steeds descend,
Low before our monarch bend !

SLEEP.

Spirits and visions,
Who serve my command
In lotted divisions
Of ocean and land ;

Who spread out my covering
To curtain the sleeper,
When eve's shades are hovering
Deeper and deeper;
Ye phantoms of thought,
Unfold to my ear,
The deeds ye have wrought
In the emerald sphere.

INCUBUS, OR NIGHTMARE.

The first-born of phantasmal shapes am I,
With heavy hand, slow step, and drowsy eye,
My realm is o'er the slumber-silent rest,
My foot-stool is the sleeper's troubled breast;
My truncheon is of lead,—I rear it up,
And pains, and cramps, and fears present my Circé cup.
I drain the lees into the sleeper's ear,
And flitting shades and changeful shapes appear;
My hand I raise, thin forms before me bow,
And bind with thorny wreath the sleeper's brow;
My bands around his prostrate limbs they cast,
And, in despotic bondage, bind him fast;
My chains in viewless rings his breast surround,
But, dull and leaden-linked, impart no clank, no sound.

The night had curtained up the drowsy day,
And shook her dew-curls o'er the midnight way;
Dark in the heavens a thunder-laden cloud
Was spread o'er all things like Creation's shroud;
And shadows, piled on thunder-shadows drear,
Oppressed all Nature in a breathless fear;
The reeling moon had passed into eclipse,
And darkness, with his black and greedy lips,
Had drank the light of the decaying stars,
And shut the planets in his prison-bars.
Beneath the slumb'rous cloud, as in a tent,
Athwart the death-like realms of Sleep I went.
The vapour-shadows for my robe I spread,
And bound a henbane chaplet on my head;
I took no constant feature, form, nor guise,
But ever changed, as change the shifting skies,
And, multiformed in shape, in size, in hue,
I passed a phantom Proteus to the view.
Now a hydra, now a bear,—
Now a fiend, with snaky hair,—
A dragon now, with flaming crest,
Coiling round the sleeper's breast,
Numb, and stiff, and icy cold,
Pressing every slimy fold;
A spectre now of spectre death,
Feeding on the dreamer's breath;

Now a black, misshapen creature,
Crooked in form, and swart in feature;
Half sea-monster, half a man,—
A very phantom Caliban;
Then I grew to Titan stature,
Like the first-create of Nature;
Then, with thunder-quivered form,
Like the genii of the storm,
Pouring from electric phials,
Lightning streams, and tempest trials;
Then like dripping shapes that keep
Their dwellings in the caverned deep;
Now the huge, unwieldy morse,
Or armour-bearing river-horse;
And scaly forms, who hold their sports
Down in myriad-fathomed courts,
(Where old Ocean moans to sleep
When no storm is on the deep,)
Feeding on the carcase there
Of the ship-wrecked mariner;
Then a monster like to none
In shape or in comparison,
By the dreamer's couch I stood,
With eye-balls rolling fierce in blood,
And pressed my rough and icy knee
On his chest immovably,

While loud my bursts of laughter broke
As thunder-claps from rock to rock,—
These wild revels I have done
Since the setting of the sun.

SEVENTH DREAM.

A seaman was keeping his watch for the night,
The crew were all sleeping, no land was in sight;
The sails were unfurled, but all idly they hung,
For no ripple was curled, and no night breezes sung;
Keen, and frosty, and bright were the stars in the sky,
And the moon's freezing light coldly streamed from on high;
By watching o'erspent, as the pilot reclined,
Soft visions I sent to enrapture his mind;
All-heedless he dreams of a favouring gale,
Of warm sunny beams and of harbour in hail;
But ere morn he will wake with the crash and the shock,
As the light rafters break on the wrinkled-browed rock.
Hail! King Sleep.

EIGHTH DREAM.

An Afric had crept to his rush-plaited bed,
In anguish he wept, and in spirit he bled;

His dark eye was closed ;—but the tear-drops which
hung
On his dusk cheek disclosed how his bosom was
stung ;
With frequent whip-lashes his back was o'erscarred,
With red, bamboo gashes his shoulder was marred;
With the stamp of his lord he was branded like
Cain,
And his ankles were gored with the fetter and chain.
I hushed the deep groan of the gold-bartered slave,
And he dreams of his own by the hot Niger wave,
Where the lion he braved,—where the pard he laid
low,
Where the tamarind waved,—where he grasped the
strong bow;
Where the young negro maid, though of dark
swarthy brow,
Lapped his head in the shade of the pomegranate
bough;
But ere first matin-song will his slumber be broke,
When the driver's loud thong calls him up to the
yoke.
Hail! King Sleep.

NINTH DREAM.

By a dying bed a mother was weeping,
And fanning the head of her daughter sleeping;
The maiden was pale and her temples fair,
For the grave's white veil was spreading there;
You would deem that Death, ere his finger he raised
To unprison her breath, on her beauty gazed;
The angels of love round her slumbers stay,
And to mansions above will waft her away,
Ere the odour lip of the rose-wreathed morn
Can the dewdrop sip from the misty lawn;
But my traitorous shade o'er the mother is spread,
And she dreams that the maid on the morrow will wed.

Hail! King Sleep!

TENTH DREAM.

The monk's midnight bell in the grey turret wheeled,
And the yesterday's knell on the abbey-clock peeled;
On his dungeon-floor a conspirator slumbered,
His days they are o'er, and his hours are numbered;
Ere next sun's setting he'll sleep with the dead,
For the headsman is whetting the axe's head;
The chaplain appeared at the early clock,
And the jailor has reared the dark scaffolding-block;

O'er his deep sleep I hung, and his heart I betrayed,
For around him I flung an infatuate shade,—
His dreams are of time and of stratagems bold;
But ere two hours chime will his knell be tolled.
Hail! King Sleep.

ELEVENTH DREAM.

The night-hag was seeking the planet-charmed flow'r;
The owlet was shrieking in belfry and tower;
Uproused at the tones like a phantom I sped
To the charnel of bones, to the courts of the dead.
The death-cricket shrill in the cypress was heard,
For the winds were so still not an ivy-leaf stirred;
Through the dark dreary yew the moon glimmered as pale
As Hope peering through Sorrow's shadowy veil,—
All whimpled in white, and so spectral and chill,
She cast her wan light on the cenotaphs still,
Where friendless and wild, and moon-stricken and lone,
Sate a thin orphan child on the sepulchre stone;
But with phantasy's hues I have wildered his brain,
And his kindred he views on Life's river again.
Hail! King Sleep.

TWELFTH DREAM.

Where Ganges's swift water is rolling afar,
And the land groans with slaughter 'neath Juggernaut's car,
One wasted in sickness sank down in his tent,
With hardship, and weakness, and labour o'erspent;
Long years have departed,—far leagues he has passed,
Since, young and strong-hearted, a last look he cast
On the spot of his childhood,—the home of his sire,
The glen in the wild-wood, and dear village spire;
But Hope gleamed before him, and bade him depart,
And the swift vessel bore him with zeal in his heart;
Bright, bright was the vision which round him was spread,
On high Christian mission far regions to tread;
From toil he has shrunk not, though bending with years,
In pain he has sunk not, in sorrow nor tears;
On task high and holy long years he has trod,
And now he sinks slowly to sleep in his God!
Like an angel I fluttered from shores of the blest,
And sweetly I uttered of regions of rest,—
His journey is ending, and seraphs are nigh,
O'er his calm spirit bending, to bear him on high.
Hail! King Sleep.

CHORUS OF DREAMS.

Fellow-phantoms, slumber-born,
Summoned by the midnight horn
Of the night-bird sounding shrill,
When the world is hushed and still,
And across the plains of air
Chill Boötes tracks the Bear;
Watchful sentinels of night,
Soul-less, shadow-less, and light,
Featly, featly, trip it round
To the planets' airy sound,
Heralding our monarch's car
Neath the zenith Polar star.

SEMI-CHORUS.

Upspring, upspring
On noiseless wing,
Fellow-spirits and sisters mine;
The grey clouds beat
With nimble feet,
And the labyrinth dance entwine.

CHORUS.

Whisper low, the spirit Pæan,
And the chorus Hymenæan,
Lead the light-heeled Pyrrichæan;—
In the air, in the air,
Our mysteries prepare;
And the drowsy-petalled flower,
And the eyelid-bending shower,
And dews of dreamy power,
Scatter here, scatter there,
Round Sleep's soldan chair,
Till Morning scatter light from her many-blossomed bower.

SEMI-CHORUS.

Thus we hold our mystic rites
Through the shadow-curtained nights;
Thus we lead our spirit ring,
While the world is slumbering;
Thus we lead our noiseless sports
Through the starry-studded courts,
While the white-horned moon on high
Smiles upon our revelry.
Silence, with uplifted fingers,
In our rear of shadow lingers;—

Echo, habitant of mountains,
Reedy banks, and mossy fountains,
Who, on couch of leafy pillow,
Pendant from the rocky willow,
Vapour-circled in the wood,
Sleeps as bride of Solitude,
With the glow-fly's beaming light
For her cresset through the night,—
Echo, clad in floating air,
With her veil of gossamer,
And whose soft and unseen tresses,
Hamadryad gaily dresses,
By our pennons shaded dim,
Answers not our spirit hymn.

FULL CHORUS.

Thus we lead our cavalcade
Through the floating realms of shade,
Till the dawn on eastern stair
Parts the Twilight's braided hair;
And the early lark gives warning
Of the purple-hooded morning;
And the hours, with watchful eye,
Peep through Ocean's canopy,
Where the sun, on crystal bed,
Lays at eve his beamy head

On a rich and coral throne,
With flowered weeds to slumber on,
Bright with shells and pearly gems,
Which fall from sea-maid diadems,
Till the setting watch-stars peep
In amber chambers of the deep,
And bid him leave his hall of pearls,
And shake his golden-flowing curls,

SLEEP.

Hark! I hear the bird of morn
Shrilly wind his bugle horn,*
Waning is the moon and pale,
Covered in a fleecy veil,—
And every star hath hung its lamp
In ocean chambers chill and damp.
Fly, ye thin shadows, fly,
The twilight clouds are severing in the sky;
And lo! the orb of Day
Peeps through the tremulous fringe of Morning's
eye-lash grey.

. . . . . .

* The feathered songster chaunticleer
Han wounde his bugle-horn.—*Chatterton.*

The shadows fled, and Darkness furled
Its curtain from the waking world;
The Morning, from her watch-tower bright,
Had cast her beams of amber light;
The curling mist was rolled away,
The early birds were quiring gay,
And freshly breathed the new-born Day.
I looked on the Morn with waking eyes,
But my brain was reeling with phantasies.
Oh! strange and wondrous are dreams, I ween,
Like forms in a broken mirror seen,
Disjointed, and shapeless, and strange to behold,
And multiplied a hundred-fold!
And solemn is Sleep, mysterious Sleep,
When Silence and Midnight around it creep,
And the soul from the weight of earth upsprings,
And speeds away upon spirit wings;
And Thought is unembodied and free
From the limits of Reality.
Oh! solemn is Sleep! when the dreamer's tone
  Is faint as if spirits hovered around him,—
And you hear the softly-uttered moan,
  As if some unseen presence bound him.
Oh! solemn is Sleep! as with silent tread,
You gaze on its rest as you gaze on the dead,
And feel for a while that the sleeper has done
With the weary world he sojourns on.

But oh! more solemn and dread is Sleep
When it tells of slumber long and deep,
Which no vision disturbs, and no change dispels,
And where Silence and Death are the sentinels;
Till to east, till to west, till to earth's farthest bound,
The trump of the last *reveillee* sound,
At whose shrill echo Death shall start,
And the adamant gates of the grave dispart;
And the sea, and the earth, shall give up their dead
Wherever their bones lie scatteréd;
And from rock, and from tomb, and from depths
shall arise
The buried of countless centuries,
In myriad, myriad ranks up-borne,
To meet the break of the judgment-morn!

II.

THE BELL.

The bell, the changeful bell,
It rings out its varied tone;—
It peals in joy, or it sounds in woe,—
It goes through its changes fast or slow,
It speaks to the city, or forest lone;—
The bell, the changeful bell.

The bell, the joyous bell,
It rings on the marriage-morn;
It welcomes the bridegroom, it welcomes the bride,
It sends out its greeting far and wide,
From the merry belfry borne;—
The bell, the joyous bell.

The bell, the festive bell,
It rings for the new-born child;—
It rings at the merry Christmas time,
It welcomes the young new year with its chime,
And the hearth with its yule-log piled;—
The bell, the festive bell.

The bell, the merry bell,
It rings for a victory;
It rings for the sword of battle sheathed,
It rings for the hero with laurels wreathed,
It rings with its voice of glee;—
The bell, the merry bell.

The bell, the vesper bell,
It floats on the evening air;—
It tells that the weary day is done;
It bids farewell to the parting sun;
It calls to peace and prayer;—
The bell, the vesper bell.

The bell, the alarum bell,
It breaks on the silent night;
It rouses the sleeper with wild amaze,
It proclaims the fire-sheet's ruddy blaze
On the dark sky gleaming bright;—
The bell, the alarum bell.

The bell, the passing bell,
It speaks of a spirit fled;
It tells of the pang and the parting tear,
Of the Angel of Death yet hovering near,
And the change of the silent dead;—
The bell, the passing bell.

The bell, the tolling bell,
It moves at the bier's slow pace;
It speaks of the mourner's solemn tread,
Of the coffin, and pall, and the narrow bed,
And the last, lone resting-place;—
The bell, the tolling bell.

The bell, the changeful bell,
True emblem of mortal life;—
Where smiles are hand in hand with tears,—
And grief on the heels of joy appears,—
And greeting succeeds to strife;—
The bell, the changeful bell.

The bell, the wise old bell,
Full many a tale it tells,—
Of hands and hearts in fondness lent
Of hands and hearts asunder rent,
Of meetings and farewells;—
The bell, the wise old bell,

The bell, the grave old bell,
Still hangs in the belfry grey;
It has seen ten ages of men fulfil
Their little life;—and *it* hangs there still,
But those ages where are *they*,
Thou bell, thou grave old bell?

For *thee*, perchance, the wise old bell
Has rung out each changeful year;
At birth, and feast-day, and bridal morn;
For thee *once more* must its sound be borne,
When its voice cannot reach *thine* ear;—
List *now* to the wise old bell.

III.

THE OLD GREY STONE.

I know a quiet scene,
Where a village church-yard lies,
With its little mounds of turfy green,
Beneath the sunny skies;
And many a narrow bed is there,
And many tombs arise.

That simple village church
Has stood for many a day,
With windows glazed with dim green glass,
And its stones of hoary grey;
The dial-plate upon its tower
Is marked with Time's decay.

O'er many a lowly grave
Long grass and weeds have grown,—
And many a once-proud monument
Lies rent and overthrown;—
Yet mid the ruined pomp around
There stands an old grey stone.

That quaint old-fashioned stone,
By age and storm decayed,
Is sunk and sloping to the ground
Beneath an old tree's shade;
You scarce can trace the chiselled skull
Upon its face portrayed.

The moss and lichens hoar
Its surface overspread;
They have grown into the lettered grooves,
Where once, perchance, was read
The name of him who slept beneath
Among the quiet dead.

Stern Time! thy silent touch
Soon crumbles to the ground
The columned pile,—the sculptured urn,—
The proud and lofty mound;—
And where thy withering hand has been
Ah! soon no trace is found.

A little while our names
Are sounding in men's ears;
A little while their register,
On fretted stone appears;
But this is soon erased—forgot—
In silent, passing years.

A homily I read
From off that old grey stone;—
'Tis true no characters are there
But those with moss o'ergrown;
Yet louder now it speaks,—than when
A name was traced thereon.

That old grey stone—it tells
What fleeting things we be,
Borne on the noiseless waves of Time
Into Eternity,
As scattered sands upon the shore
Are swept into the sea.

Like that unheeded stone
We crumble and decay;
They, whose brief names were graven there,
Oh tell me where are they?
The toil and moil of Time and Tide
Have swept them far away!

Yet pilgrims upon earth,
Say, why should we deplore,
Because the place, which knows us now,
Shall know us soon no more!
Because the stormy waves are passed,
And reached the safety-shore!

What though of us no trace
Escape the common doom,
If we have sought a deathless name,
When those of earth consume,—
A name in God's own Record Book,—
A name beyond the tomb!

IV.

EVENING MUSINGS.

The day has gone—the sun has set,—
Far down has sunk its parting ray;
But its last glories linger yet,
Paving with gold the western way.
The eve comes on,—its shadows spread,—
And narrow-in the landscape round;—
While pensive stillness seems to tread,
As if it moved o'er hallowed ground;
Sweet stillness,—oh! sweet evening hour,
My spirit owns thy sacred power!

Up from behind yon eastern hill,
The full round moon is rising bright,
And o'er the scene so hushed and still,
Sheds calmly down its mellow light.
On hill, on vale, on ivied tow'r,
It rests with harmonizing beam;
And through each grove, and lawn, and bow'r,
Pours in its rich and silver stream;
Till lake, and earth, and stainless sky,
Filled with its imaged beauty lie.

So Memory's calm and moon-like pow'r
O'er sense and feeling sheds its ray;
Bathing in light each cherished hour,
And peaceful scenes now passed away.
And when around the dreaming soul
Thought's pensive shade of twilight spreads,—
Remembrance bids it backward roll,
And beams of saint-like like lustre sheds,
Circling each scene of days gone by,
In Sabbath-still tranquillity.

The flowers, which blossom 'neath the moon,
And sip the fresh and starry dew,
Are lovelier far than those of noon,
Which shine in tints of brighter hue;

Thus flow'rs and scenes, which 'neath the pow'r
Of tranquillizing Memory lie,
Are dearer than the living hour,
Or blossoms of Reality.
For hushed and calm our foot-steps tread
O'er hallowed precincts of the dead.

I gaze on each mysterious star,
As one by one appears on high,
Shedding its peaceful rays afar
From yonder lustrous, liquid sky.
I ask does care its dwelling make
In yon bright Heav'n above the spheres?
There does the bleeding bosom ache?
Or streams the eye with bitter tears?
Is heart from heart asunder rent,
In saddest, loneliest languishment?

Ah no! within that world of light
One endless joy, one love is known;
No change can check their blest delight,—
No absence mar their happy tone.
There, purified from sin and stain,
From sorrow hushed, and free from care,
The true in heart immortal reign,
And love, as souls made perfect, there.
A blest, a pure, eternal love
Surrounds them there from God above.

V.

WHEN SLUMBER SPREADS ITS DROOPING VEIL.

When Slumber spreads its drooping veil,
O'er weary eyes which wake to weep,—
And silver visions lightly sail
Across the dreamy lids of Sleep;—
Oh! deem not then that sleepless Thought
Lies hushed and stirless here with me;
By memory's voiceless whispers caught
It unembodied flies to thee;
And raptured wings to every scene,
Where'er our former steps have been.

It wanders to each winding stream,
With blue waves dancing fast and bright,—
To meadows clad in summer's beam,—
And woods in moon-ray's silver light.
It hears again on airy wing
The joyous lark as then it sung,—
And lists the wild bee's murmuring
From ev'ry bank where woodbine clung;
But dark and drear each spot would be,
If hallowed not with thoughts of thee.

It flies with pain and weariness,
  And seeks thy love's encalming rest;
And gathering there fond tones that bless,
  Returns in quiet to my breast.
And oft in echoed notes it breathes,—
  Sweet notes remembrance loves to sing,—
And oft a flowered braid it wreathes
  From buds which Love and Feeling bring,—
And fondly hangs it on the shrine
Where rests my mingling soul with thine.

VI.

LIFT, LIFT THE PRAYER TO HEAVEN.

When Morning opes her curtain grey,
  And scatters rosy flowers;
When Freshness breathes along the way,
Where blithesome breezes sweetly play
  Around the blossomed bowers;
And high in air, on trilling wings,
The lark his early anthem sings,
  Lift, lift the prayer to Heaven.

When Even's purple braid is spread
Along the western mountain;
And bird, and breeze, and bee have fled
Each to its hushed and balmy bed,
And left each flower and fountain;
When silence breathes so calm and deep
Over the roseate lips of Sleep,
Lift, lift the prayer to Heaven.

When eye, and sense, and soul are dead
To scenes which float around thee;
And back again with ling'ring tread
To by-gone hours thy heart has fled,
When holy musings found thee;
When *past* delights all *present* seem,
And all the *present* as a dream,
Lift, lift the prayer to Heaven.

When moonlight's still and sacred hour
Its softest sigh is breathing;
And ev'ry bud and folding flow'r
Yielding to Adoration's pow'r,
Its incense-gift is wreathing;
When borne by angels to the skies,
Thought, soul, and sense devoutly rise,
Lift, lift the prayer to Heaven.

VII.

WAKE MUSIC, HOLIEST MUSIC WAKE.

Wake Music, holiest Music wake,
My soul is weak and faint with care;
And Melody, perchance, may take
The clouded shadow from Despair;
For tears on Sorrow's lid surprized,
By Music's spell are crystallized.

Above the grave of buried years
My restless thoughts in anguish fly;
And strew the hot and bitter tears
With fadeless buds of Memory;
They mingle o'er the buried years
Unfading buds and bitter tears.

I call on the departed hours,
In agonized remorse I call;
They come,—but wreathed in fun'ral flow'rs;
They come,—but to upbraid me all;
They tell of seasons given in vain,—
Of days which cannot come again!

Then wake, oh! wake some hallowed strain,
As moonrise calm—as passion deep;—
And it shall cool my burning brain,
And soothe my troubled soul to sleep;
While o'er it angels bend from Heav'n,
And tell of anguisht hearts forgiven!

VIII.

THE SUNNY SUMMER IS DEAD AND GONE.

The sunny summer is dead and gone,
The purple flow'rs are fading and dying;
No more, at the bright and early dawn,
Is the breeze, or the bee, to the thyme-bed borne;
But the wind is sighing
Through creaking branches, stript and torn,
Whose yellow leaves afar are flying;
To sunnier islets the swallow has flown,
And left the streamlet lone, ah! lone!

The winds are gathering loud and shrill;
And beams no more on the waves are sleeping;
The lily is torn from the silver rill,
The heath-bloom and hare-bell have died on the hill,
And the morn is weeping,
To view the mists, so dark and chill,
O'er the pale year creeping;
Which lies with its blossoms all seared and dead,
Like the heart when its hope and its love are fled.

So in life steals on the autumn drear,
And winter gathers chilly and clouded,
Strewing around us, all dark and sear,
The blossoms of many a by-gone year,
In pale leaves shrouded;
While gloomy forebodings around their bier,
Like mourners are crowded;
And the dirge-like sigh escapes from the heart,
Bewailing that happier days must depart.

But spring shall smile on the winter cold,
With first flowers decking its brow of whiteness;
The bursting buds shall begin to unfold,
And the skies be draped in curtains of gold,
And the gay birds flutter on wings of lightness;

And we, too, shall break from the wintry mould
In forms of brightness,
When the drear tomb is passed,—and on radiant wing
We soar 'mid the beams of eternal Spring!

IX.

THE SOUL OF MAN.

Sonnet.

A deep, unfathomed sea, whose troubled breast
Now woos the sunbeam, and now rocks the storm;
A mystic glass, o'er which each changing form
Of Love and Hate, of Quiet and Unrest,—
Like Night and Morn,—pass in alternate round;—
A hall of visions, whose wierd picturings
Dimly embody past and present things,
And blend with these the Future's dark profound;
A firmament, where brilliant stars are set,
But swept by racking shapes of storm and cloud;—
Now low on earth, in gloomiest caverns met,—
Now high on eagle pinion soaring proud;
Such is man's soul, in virtue or in crime,—
Now tossed,—now calm,—now abject,—now sublime.

X.

A REFLECTION.

Each day I stand where tombs unnumbered lie,
Each mound has been bedewed with many a tear;
And every death has snapped some kindred tie!
Our friends depart, ah woe! and leave us here
Like mournful yews above each sepulchre!
Yet, like the Sibyl's books,* each one that's gone
Adds value to the rest; and doubly dear
The living few should to our hearts be borne,
To fill the aching void whence many a hope is torn!

* One of the Sibyls, says tradition, presented herself to Tarquin, and offered for sale nine rolls or volumes at a very high price; the price was refused, and the Sibyl departed. Shortly after she returned, having destroyed three, and offered the remaining six, still demanding the same price. Being again refused, she again disappeared, destroyed three more, and, presenting herself the third time, asked the same sum for the three as she at first demanded for the nine. Her extraordinary behaviour astonished Tarquin,—the rolls were purchased, and for long afterwards consulted on all occasions important to the Roman state. They were called the *Sibylline Verses*.

XI.

TO MY DEAR CHILD ON HIS FOURTH BIRTH-DAY.

Bless thee, my child, another year has fled,
Its days, and weeks, and months, have hurried by;
Four years have swiftly hastened o'er thy head,
Bearing us nearer to Eternity.

Bless thee, my child! and as thy opening mind
Unfolds, as opens the young spring-tide flow'r,
Each day some heavenly blessing may it find
To guard, to guide thee, through Life's changing hour.

Bless thee, my child! now, from thy infant days,
May God above thy simple heart possess;
Lead thee to love His Word,—to lisp His praise,—
And early know a Christian's blessedness.

Bless thee, my child! I ask not wealth nor fame,—
They cannot bless thee—cannot give thee peace;
Enough if thou canst keep an honoured name,
And still find manna in the wilderness.

Bless thee, my child! a father's blessing flows
From a full heart, up-breathing many a prayer,
That grace may strengthen as thy childhood grows,
And ripen still beneath thy Saviour's care.

Bless thee, my child! The holy Jesus deigned
Children to bless and in His arms embrace;
Thee may he thus,—by early love constrained,
Form to His will—and teach to seek His face.

XII.

ABSENCE.

They *never* part, whose mingling souls
Sweet dreams of fond remembrance fill;
Though ocean's wave between them rolls,
Their *hearts* remain together still.

Swift is the eagle through the skies,
But swifter love's unwearied wing;
O'er seas, o'er wildest rocks it flies
In fondest, holiest communing.

As golden bees, in winter's frost,
Unstore the spoils of summer hours;
So we, when far asunder tost,
Will live on sweets of Memory's flowers.

We may not hear each other's tone,—
Yet we *can* hear the echoing heart;
Far parted we may wander lone,
But *souls* can never, never part!

XIII.

JOY, YOUTH, AND TIME.

Sonnet.

In wild creation of ideal dreams,
Methought I saw three visionary forms:—
The first with flow'rs was garlanded,—and beams
Played in his eye's blue depth,—but swift as storms
He bounded on o'er stream and precipice;
The other two started with rival pace,

Tracking his course o'er stream and wilderness;
One grey in years, and trenched with wrinkled face;—
Buoyant the other,—with the morning's kiss
Still on his rosy cheek;—yet in the chase
The grey-beard far outsped the nimble boy:—
"Youth starts a race with Time in search of Joy,"
My spirit said, "and in the giddy maze
Loses the phantom Joy and fleeting days."

XIV.

TO THE LAST SWALLOW.

To the isles of the south, where the vintage red
Leaps forth into sparkling fountains;
To the isles of the south, where the bee is fed
On the richest sweets the bright blossoms shed
O'er valleys and fragrant mountains;
Thither to happy and azure skies
Thy sunny band in its swiftness flies,
And leaves thee lone, ah lone!

Companionless bird, with the wounded wing,
Dost thou seek for the April flowers?
Or seek'st thou for skies of the laughing Spring,
And the sweet bright birds that untiring sing
From their home amid summer bowers?—
The sky it is darkened,—its smiles are fled;—
The joyous birds, and flowers are dead,
And have left thee lone, ah lone!

Ah me! thou art e'en as the last faint ray
Of Hope in the midst of our sadness;
Though the beams which were round it have vanished away,
Yet one fond remembrance—one beamlet will stay
To brighten some vision of gladness;
And though all around it is fading and drear,
Yet still it can whisper of joys that *were* dear,
Ere the bosom was lone, ah lone!

XV.

SPRING BRINGS HOPE.

The happy time of flowers
Is waking into birth,
And Spring, with odor-showers,
Is coming o'er the earth,
With violets in her lap, and eye of sunny mirth.

All verdurous are the mountains,
All azure are the skies;
And, clust'ring near the fountains,
Are lithe anemonies,
Waving beneath the breath of winter's parting sighs.

The bees will soon be swinging
Within the orchis' bells,
And swallows, hereward winging,
Will leave the southern dells,
Where, light and sunny guests, they flew o'er asphodels.

As Spring to budding flowers,
As sunlight to the stream,
As dews to drooping bowers,
To skies the morning's beam,
So art thou, gladdening Hope, in Life's distracted dream.

As some cool fountain springing
Amid the desert's heat,—
A dewy freshness flinging
To bless the pilgrim's feet,—
So steals o'er withered hearts thy freshness cool and sweet.

Thou, spring-like, ever beamest
With purest, softest ray;
An Eden-light, thou streamest
Along our desert way,
Making this vale of tears to blossom 'mid decay.

Like a fair saint thou guidest
Our longings to the skies;
Yet round our steps abidest
Through all our tears and sighs,
Till Earth's vain shadows yield to Heaven's realities.

XVI.

VICISSITUDE.

I stood mid the wrecks of a mouldering fane,
Its altars were swept by the wind and the rain;
The dank grass and trefoil had spread o'er the floor,
And the swell of its music was echoed no more.
The desolate harp of its Druid was there,
The sport of the night-gust,—the sport of the air;
Its half-broken strings were neglected and still,
And its tone was in sighs, as the wind whistled shrill.
I said to the harp:—"Is thy minstrelsy o'er?
Why ceases the music which filled thee of yore?
Can Echo have wearied to whisper thy tone,—
And why are these altars neglected and lone?"
Passed the breeze;—and responded the harp with a sigh:—
"The minstrel hath left me,—no singers are by;
The spirit of Loneliness hovers around,
And the sweet voice of Music in silence is bound!"
It ceased;—and the night-wind in murmurs arose,
And the last of its chords snapt in twain at the close.

I passed to a bower where nettles were twined,
And the seeds of the thistle were strewn by the wind;
The rose-tree was hid by the darnel and tare,
And weeds and rank night-shade empoisoned the air;
I had trod the same spot when the spring-tide was new,
And Heav'n shed o'er it its brightest of blue;
Ah! then what sweet blossoms around it were hung;
How soft the wind whispered!—how sweet the birds sung!
But, alas! the bright stream, edged with many a flower,
Which rolled, like a glittering snake, by the bower,
Was now choked with sedge and o'ermatted with weeds,
And its marge was entangled with rushes and reeds;
I said to the stream:—"What hath scattered thy flowers?
Where wanders the sweetness which scented thy bowers?"
It sighed in low murmurs:—"The summer has fled,
Each blossom of fragrance is withered and dead;
Their petals all drooped, and they fell day by day,
And the wild winds of Autumn have borne them away."

Ah me! when each friend from our bosom is torn,
And the freshness of youth-tide is withered and worn;
When the buds of young promise lie scattered afar,
And the stript heart has known what realities are;
We stand like that fane amid years and decay,
Where the banners of Ruin wave darkling and grey;
The harp and the heart-string, which wakened to song,
Lie spell-bound in silence unbroken along;—
The blossoms, which scattered their sweetness around,
Are robbed of their fragrance, and strewn on the ground;
And the stream of delight, once so bright to behold,
Now steals amid darkness, all matted and cold:—
Yet *all* does not leave us,—and all is not drear,
Though many a promise lies withered and sear;—
There are blessings, which strengthen and ripen with years,
And hopes which shine brightest when beaming through tears;—
The Faith which exalts,—deep Devotion and Love,
And Piety kindling her lamp from above;—
These linger beside us when all else has passed,
Strong and firm to the end, brighter still to the last;
They bloom like the ivy, still green 'mid decay,
And hallow the shrine as it crumbles away!

XVII.

TO ————————

———

As bright and universal as the beams
  Which shine from Heav'n o'er hills and valley's shade,
Thus bright, dear lady, from thy presence streams
  The smile in soft and gentlest lustre rayed,—
Which makes an Eden where it falls. The dreams
  Of other days are resting on thy brow,—
The recollection of gay flow'rs,—the gleams
  Of sunshine on the lake,—the waving bough,—
The sky-lark's note,—and bee's low murmuring.
  Thy presence lent a charm to all;—the bird
Sang sweeter; and the starry-bosomed Spring
  Breathed softer incense;—Echo's voice, then heard,
Seemed like an angel's whisper from above,
And all around thee felt the presence of deep love.

And now thou art a lustre, and a star,
  A star of home,—a leading, centre sphere,—
A secret power, attracting from afar,—
  A green oäsis in Life's desert drear,—

A desert where no palms or fountains are,—
The desert of a city;—yet e'en here
Thou woo'st the bosom to forgetfulness,
Bearing a branch of olive like the dove
Over Life's waste,—until this wilderness
Becomes a blissful scene,—a scene of love.
The Pleiad thou, descending from the skies
To bless an earthly home;—a drop of dew,
Which in the flow'rets' drooping bosom lies;—
A magnet-star still true though darkest tempests rise.

XVIII.

THE NIGHT-FLOWER.

Through curtained tent of blue and white
The soft-eyed moon is peeping;
The bee has winged its homeward flight,
Laden with sweets from blossoms bright,
And hived in balm is sleeping;
The tip-toe silence softly treads,
And each fair star serenely sheds
Its tranquil glimmerings

The dove is silent in its nest;
The halcyon by the fountain;
Each flow'ret, bending to its rest,
Has folded up its fragrant breast,
In wood, on heath, and mountain;
One only fond and faithful flow'r*
Blooms to the breeze at midnight hour,
And hears its whisperings.

And so, when morn and noon have flown,
And age is creeping o'er us,
When Life's drear evening gathers on,
And days of buds and flow'rs are gone,
And all is dim before us;—
Then,—when each flow'r of Life decays,—
Beams out in soft and heavenly rays,
Faith's fadeless blossomings.

* *Nyctanthus,* or Indian jasmine, thus described by Moore:—

> The timid jasmine buds that keep
> The odour in themselves all day;
> But, when the sunlight dies away,
> Let the delicious fragrance out
> To ev'ry breeze that roams about.

XIX.

A SUMMER'S EVE.

Auræ molles, leves auræ
Zephyri formosa natio,
Administra Chloridis,
Et supremum jam diei
Exspirantis halitus
Cùm nox, lucis filia cæca
Sævâ claudit
Lumina dextrâ.—*Casimir.*

Day spreads its golden woof of beams
Along the mountain's height;
And tints the vale, and wood, and streams,
In rich and amber light;
All ruddy is the ether's breast
With wreaths of rosy hue,
To twine o'er portals of the west
As sunset passes through;
Through wreaths of rose,—through golden gate,—
The setting sun will ride in state.

The thin-fleeced clouds before him fly,
  Their fleckered tents unfold;
And with some potent alchemy
  He changes them to gold.
Day dies;—yon isles of glory fade
  Like visions of the past,
Too full of Heav'n—too richly-rayed,—
  Too sweet,—too bright,—to last.
The Twilight braids and hoods her hair,—
Still ling'ring on her eastern stair.

The first star,—like a brilliant,—through
  The soft air glitters bright;
And Eve, in veil of misty blue,
  Glides, as a spirit, light;
From urn of moonbeam-coloured hue
  Her crystal cup she fills,
And diamond-drops of dripping dew
  On bud, and blossom, spills;—
How lovely as the Twilight spreads,
With tiptoe step she softly treads!

The bee returns from out the flow'r,
  The swallow from the pool,
The grass-hopper has made his bow'r
  In hedge-row grottoes cool;

The bat has left the ivied tower,
The owl the turret grey,
And closing blossoms tell the hour,—
The parting hour of day;—
Sweet hour of calm, oh! linger still
O'er twilight grove, and shadowy hill.

Hark! what a flood of harmony
Floats round me and above,—
The lark pours downward from the sky
His liquid notes of love;
The rill, which lightly ripples by,
Trips on with silver sound;
The very breeze is melody,
And sweetly murmurs round;
Silence itself has caught the spell,
And whispers music down the dell!

How holy is this hour of calm!
A spirit power steals by,—
A feeling of deep love,—a charm,—
A dream of ecstasy.
Freed from the earth, the light-winged thought
Can feel no check nor chain;
The soul a joy of Heav'n has caught,
Which soothes the heart from pain;
All seems but one irradiate spot,—
Care,—sorrow,—anguish,—grief,—forgot!

We live not in the present hour,
Nor in the scenes around ;—
The Past asserts its mystic pow'r,
And leads to holy ground ;
We tread the scenes of days gone by,
Through hallowed haunts we move,
We catch the beam of Friendship's eye,
We feel the grasp of Love ;—
For fond Remembrance backward strays
To pilgrim-shrines of other days.

Still, still will rapt endearment cling
To hearts which we have proved ;
And Memory wave its restless wing
O'er scenes which we have loved ;
The mind will fly to happier hours,
And bask in sunnier beams,
And rest again within the bowers
Which charmed its youth-day dreams.
And there, I ween, could most forget,
Each withered hope,—each fond regret!

XX.

SPIRIT OF THE TEMPEST.

Spirit of the Tempest, what wild chorus art thou singing?
What pæan, or what onset-word, what battle-shout so bold?
What bow of untamed toughness for the contest art thou stringing?
What flag of black defiance flaps around thy cloudy hold?

Flutt'ring in the welkin is thy sable banner flouting,
Many are thy followers of lightning, rain, and storm;
Far across the rocking deep they lift their giant shouting,
Many a scourging blast is there and thunder-quivered form.

The tresses from their black'ning brows,—their tresses wild are flying,
Tangled into tempest-woof—tangled, torn, and rent,—
Like canvas of a shattered ship along the breezes sighing,
Or flag-staff, with its tattered flag, from leaguered battlement.

Earth rocks her firmly-rooted base beneath their shout of warning,
Far throughout their cloud-pavilions battle is their boast;
Many a drowning mariner shall sink ere coming morning,
Many a widowed heart shall mourn the ravage of that host.

The eagle cannot sail thy blast, though borne on proudest pinions,
So strong thou art, so bold thou art, so curbless in thy pride;—
The wild waves but thy play-things are,—along their dark dominions
Thou rousest up their angry heads, and gatherest up the tide.

The tallest, toughest mountain-pines beneath thy hand are swinging,
Thy winds rush through and through their boughs and chant the dirgeful wail;
Thou stridest down the whitened Alps and from thy footfall springing,
The Lauwine leaps convulsively with years of snow and hail.

I love thy rapid swiftness, I love thy voice of thunder,
I love to hear the caverns shout the echo of thy tone;
Thou emblem of the mighty soul which cannot quail in wonder,
Though rocks be rent, though earth be moved, and rifted forests groan.

Around me are thy conquests won by shaft and sightless quiver,
The trophies of thy matchless might, the war-spoils of thy hand;—
The falling star,—the trembling rock,—the over-rushing river,
The splintered oak,—the broken helm,—the thunder-bolt and brand.

Proud man can not enfetter *thee*,—with victor shout and laughter;
Ha! ha! thou laughest at his might, and bold, defying brow;
His strong-hold and his donjon-keep, with stone and wheeling rafter,
Are carried with thee like the chaff, or flakes of feathered snow.

The earth is red with carnage, and the life-blood which he sheddeth,
Unsafe he rides the ocean-tide in sea-car light and proud;
But o'er the haughty neck of thee his weak foot never treadeth,
Thou scatt'rest all his prowess vain, like morn the severed cloud.

Thou undisturbed inheritor of Ether's lofty towers,
Where holdest thou thy thunder-courts and palaces of might?
Whether above the atmosphere? in caves of sea-weed flowers?
Or where the rolling sun begins, or checks at purple night?

Thou voice of the Invisible, who, in thy thunder, speaketh,
With silent awe I catch thy sound, and listen to thy roar;
The inmost feelings of my soul *His* searching lightning seeketh,
I hear *His* voice,—I feel *His* power,—I wonder and adore!

XXI.

WRITTEN ON THE FLY-LEAF OF "CHRISTIAN RETIREMENT,"

AND PRESENTED TO MY DEAR WIFE ON THE THIRTY-THIRD AND LAST ANNIVERSARY OF HER BIRTH-DAY.

Our days speed on,—our years roll o'er,
Like waves unto the sea;—
That mystic sea, without a shore,
The deep Eternity,—
And on their swift and silent tide,
Like eddying foam, we quickly glide.

Birth-days return;—and days which we
  Have canonized as dear;
To which Love, like a devotee,
  Draws reverently near;—
And offers there, with soul intense,
The heart's most costly frankincense.

Birth-days depart;—from Life's green tree
  They drop off one by one,
Like autumn leaves, so silently,
  We heed not they are gone;—
Till round us strewn, they bid us hear
That wintry age is drawing near.

Dearest, may we redeem the time,—
  The day of grace, while giv'n;—
And, as up Life's rough steep we climb,
  Find we are nearing Heav'n;
So shall our birth-days pass in peace,
And our last hours be blessedness!

XXII.

THE OLD YEAR.

Hush! with suspended breath!
Be still! a solemn hour is drawing near,
A wearied pilgrim sinks in death,—
The Old Grey Year.

The death-hour hastens on,
Soon will be heard the midnight passing bell;—
Each sound has paused to catch the tone
Of the dull knell.

How low the drear winds sigh!
A wail-like blast is heard along the air,
Weeping to see the Old Year die,
So stript and bare!

Where now are the fresh flow'rs,
Which young Spring strewed along his early way,—
Courting his love 'mid fragrant show'rs?
Ah! where are they?

Where is the beamy sky,
Which smiled, with the warm smile, so bright and clear?
There trickles from it mournfully
The sad, cold tear!

Where is the rustling pride
Of woods, which sung to him on summer eves?
Strewing upon his bier, all dried,
The withered leaves!

Where are the Autumn hues
Of red and gold which wreathed his fading brow,
Refreshing it with evening dews?
All darkened now!

Nought but the Winter's snow
Is left to whiten on his sinking head,—
Telling that head is drooping low
To its cold bed!

How many a mourner stays,
Shedding the tear, that he so soon has passed;
Gazing a fond and farewell gaze,
Ah me! the last!

To be recalled no more,
Save in the court of juried Memory,—
In vain we think his warnings o'er—
With him they die!

Let Ruth, and vain Regret,
And faithless Vows, and sorrowing mis-spent Hours,
Strew o'er his grave, with tear-drops wet,
Atoning flowers!

Let thin, grey Hairs,
And Age, whose leaf is growing pale and sear,
Mindful of their own sepulchres,
Carry his bier.

Let hands, with mercies blest,
And hearts o'er which the angel Peace has bent,
Raise grateful o'er his placid rest
A monument.

The solemn requiem sing,
And lay the Year with his five thousand sires;
And, as a fitting tribute, bring
Holier desires.

The New Year welcome give,—
Catch its brief guerdon as it passes by;—
Learn, as it speeds, with it to live,
With it to die.

Hush! with suspended tread!
Be still! a solemn moment lingers near,—
The passing bell is moving for the dead,—
The Old Grey Year.

XXIII.

THE TIE CAN NOT BE BROKEN.

The tie can not be broken,—
The holy bond of love;
Though the farewell be spoken,
And angels from above
Around thee wait on hov'ring wings,
Fulfilling their last minist'rings.

No change our *souls* can sever,
Though Death may rend the *heart*;—
Pure love abideth ever,
And spirits never part;
Still *one* our mystic beings bide,
Though sleep and earth our forms divide.

We live in sweet communion,
  Fondly and purely, still;
In more exalted union,
  Unmixed with earthly ill;
Thy spirit, lofty and divine,
  Calling to holier visions—*mine*.

How hallowed is thy sleeping,
  The world can tempt no more;
No sound of pain or weeping
  Can reach that blissful shore,
Where far from Sin, and Toil, and Strife
Thou livest in unending life.

Awhile, through grief and anguish,
  We watched beside thee here!
We saw thee daily languish,
  We wept the feeling tear;
We saw thee sinking, weak and faint,
A sufferer *now*,—and *now* a saint.

But now the strife is ended,
  The toil of life is done;
Thy spirit hath ascended;—
  The home of peace is won;
Thy soul has passed within that veil
No change can reach, no sin assail.

The eye, with tear-drops streaming,
Will look for thee in vain,—
And Memory, fondly dreaming,
Recall thee oft again;—
Yet, though unseen by kindred eye,
To Faith, to Love, thou still art nigh.

In holier bonds united,
In spirit converse sweet,
In saints' communion plighted,
Our souls shall ever meet;—
Absorbed each earthly, fleshly tie,
In that pure love, which cannot die.

XXIV.

THE SAD HEART'S VISION.

I saw a pale and stricken flower
  Droop to the earth and die,—
No more in sunlight or in shower,
No more at even's dewy hour,
  It breathed its fragrant sigh;
Its petals hung, all seared and dead,
Because its root was witheréd.

I saw a bird, with beating breast,
  In captive silence pine;
Its pinion drooped in weary rest,
Nor fluttered round its leafy nest
  Where happy sunbeams shine;—
For weak and prisoned was that wing,
And mute that drear bird's carolling.

I saw, in winter dark and cold,
  A chill and cheerless stream;
No more, with waves of dancing gold,
By verdant banks its waters rolled,

As in the summer's beam;
Its reeds and flags were frozen round,
And ice its stirless bosom bound.

I saw a home, once calm and bright,
Now sad and hung with gloom,
Dark was its erewhile happy light,
Its sunny day seemed changed to night,
Its talk was of the tomb;
For Death had passed its threshold o'er,
And left his shadow at the door.

I looked again when Spring was new,
And where that flower had died,—
Its gentle semblance sweetly grew,
Pencilled the same, with richest hue,
But far more beautified;
For Heav'n's returning sun and rain
Had bid it burst and bloom again.

Again I looked;—that captive bird
In radiant skies was free,—
Its sunny wing with joy was stirred,—
Like liquid streams of sound was heard
Its mid-air melody;—
It had forgot its captive chain,
Now it was blithe and free again.

I looked when Summer days were bright,—
That stream was rolling fair;
Its crisping waves were dancing light,
And o'er its banks, with blossoms dight,
Soft sighed the fresh'ning air;
Its current rippled free and fast,
For Winter's chilling breath was past.

I looked within that dwelling drear,
Where Death his shade had thrown,
I saw there still the *unseen* tear,
As oft the heart would ache to hear
One well-remembered tone;—
But Resignation dwelt there now,
And stilled each heart, and calmed each brow.

It whispered that the dead were still,
Afar from sin and care,
Unvexed by human pain or ill,
And, in the rest of God, fulfil
Their holy slumbers there;
And, as those whispers softly fell,
The hushed heart answered:—"All is well!"

FINIS.

My task is ended! Many a troubled thought
Of sorrow and of chast'ning has been calmed
Into soft peace and stillness, as encharmed
In rhapsody and feeling, I have sought
To sketch my poor mind's picturings,—and brought
Long-hidden shapes, in Memory's tomb embalmed,
Back into being,—while of grief disarmed,
My soul has been from saddest broodings caught.
Now graver studies, and more sobered aims,
And higher duties, call me back again;
Thy sounds of pleasing softness cease to swell
Around me,—sterner occupation claims
The heart, which fondly echoed to thy strain,
Sweet Harp,—and Dreams of Poësy,—farewell!

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